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J.G. Fichte / F.W.J. Schelling

Translated, edited, and with an Introduction by
Michael G. Vater and David W. Wood

The Philosophical Rupture between Fichte and Schelling

Selected Texts and
Correspondence (1800–1802)

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INTRODUCTION

The Trajectory of German Philosophy After Kant, and the “Difference” Between Fichte and Schelling

The most obvious symptoms of an epoch-making system are the misunderstandings and the awkward conduct of its adversaries.

—G. W. F. Hegel, *The Difference between
Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*¹

Although Hegel doubtless had Reinhold’s new interest in philosophical realism or perhaps Schleiermacher’s psychological interpretation of religious truth in mind as the “awkward symptoms of the age” and its dichotomizing reception of Kant’s legacy when he penned these words, they can stand as the epitome of the relations between Fichte and Schelling in the years leading up to Hegel’s first published essay. After 1800, Fichte and Schelling each viewed the letters and publications of his “collaborator” with suspicion. Periods of trust and encouragement alternated with spasms of mistrust and outbreaks of accusations of personal betrayal and intellectual short-sightedness. Only one who with Hegel fervently believed in the “power of the negative” could be edified at the sight of titanic strife between powerful intellects who so deftly perceived the divisive issues of the times and addressed their solution with such insight and breadth of knowledge, but who persistently failed to identify the common position they were publicly seen to represent and complained instead of a single, massive “difference” that separated them. Neither Hegel’s essay nor any single utterance by Fichte or Schelling exactly pins down the difference between them or underscores the underlying common position that it presumes. That work is left to the reader and her detective instincts. The editors and translators wish to let the texts speak for themselves, and by “texts” they mean both the letters exchanged between the principals from 1800 to 1802 and the published works from those years, which they exchanged in hopes of resolving the “difference.”

We think the letters and published works have roughly equal standing, for when the former turn to philosophical topics they generally focus on very broad issues of philosophical presuppositions, certainty, and methodology left over after their various and intricately argued versions of “the system” had been sent to their respective publishers. The letters are placed first to provide an introduction to the texts that follow, not because they have explanatory priority or because the cultural and biographical situations they reference illuminate the “difference” better than the published works. Similarly, the comments in the pages that follow are offered to point out a possible reading of the legacy of German philosophy after Kant, but they will not open up a royal road through the by-ways of the history of philosophy nor will they suggest that what the principals and their contemporaries saw as the one difference was the one that will necessarily stand today as the central philosophical issue. In particular, we are agnostic on Hegelian presuppositions that outcomes are better than prior conditions or that one can make an easy separation between *reflection*—or the work of *intellect*—and *reason* or *intellectual intuition*. No philosophical distinction can be univocally deployed, and if quantum indeterminacies arise in physics, one can hardly expect unambiguous meanings in social discourse, much less philosophy.

The Legacy of Kant

[T]he metaphysics of nature as well as morals, but above all the *preparatory* (propaedeutic) critique of reason that dares to fly with its own wings, alone constitutes that which we call philosophy in a genuine sense. This relates everything to wisdom, but through the path of science, the only one which, once cleared, is never overgrown and leads to error.

—Immanuel Kant, *Architectonic of Pure Reason*,
Critique of Pure Reason A850/B878²

By the early 1790s the bulk of Kant’s great systematic writings had appeared, including the three *Critiques* and the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, but it was not widely recognized that the critical philosophy formed a comprehensive system instead of multiple preliminary sketches for a future system. Kant had given the *Critique of Pure Reason* a partial rewrite that distanced his position from idealism, furthered its claims to have definitively reconciled rationalism and empiricism, and announced that theoretical philosophy had been given a “scientific” foundation by a Copernican reversal of perspective.³ The enduring achievement of the *First Critique* was to insist that philosophy must settle questions of foundations and methodology before it embarked on comprehensive explanation—that *quid facti?* could not be settled without *quid juris?*⁴ If Kant thought his contribution had ended metaphysics or the

attempt to think the supersensible, he did not foresee how the subjective or Copernican turn coupled with methodological introspection could produce the encyclopedic adventures in world-description that would flow from the pens of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in the coming decades. The *Critique of Practical Reason* sliced through the theoretical knot of freedom and determinism, declared the primacy of practical reason in the phenomenon of conscience, and put the would-be objects of metaphysical speculation within the reach of hope or “rational religion.” The *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* provided a theoretical framework for empirical physics, postulating matter as filling space, compounded of opposite forces, supporting phenomenal properties such as mass and density. Both of these works could be viewed as tidy solutions to pesky but rather regional problems, as could the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*’s limited justification for cognitive overreach by the artist and the empirical scientist of theoretical bent. Yet something of the sweep of Kant’s analysis and the grandeur of his philosophical nomenclature—are not the famous “transcendental deductions” the consummate Rube Goldberg inventions?—seemed to inflate his philosophical results beyond his personal intentions, and the wind which soon filled the sails of the good ship *Transcendental Idealism* carried it swiftly out of safe empirical harbor into uncharted oceans of “Speculation.”⁵ And despite the popular message conveyed by the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* that the transcendental critique had slain the dragon of dogmatism, Kant’s own tidiness in crafting distinctions may have paved the way for the resurrection of robustly nonempirical philosophy in the succeeding decades, for he closes the *First Critique* by insisting on the distinction between a “propaedeutical” or preparatory function of *critique* and the full systematic investigation of the reach of reason in nature and morals that could legitimately be called *metaphysics*.⁶ A plausible, although none too tidy, reading of the state of “Transcendental Philosophy” at the beginning of the nineteenth century could view Kant as having definitely established the *propaedeutic* to an experiential metaphysics, while Fichte and Schelling were hard at work attempting to expand and consolidate the foundations of the metaphysics of morals and metaphysics of nature that Kant had left behind. In this broad sense, Schelling and Fichte believed they were collaborators on a shared “scientific” enterprise; even when they had misgivings about each other, they were still eager to have the public perceive them as united under the banner of Transcendental Philosophy—as if it were genuinely the “perennial philosophy” engendered by modernity, and not just an isolated contribution.

Whatever Kant himself said about the future of philosophy, his texts seem to point to quite different, although equally fertile, territories of development once philosophy had torn itself away from the delusory project of trying to make definite theoretical pronouncements about the supposedly ultimate anthropological, psychological, and moral frameworks of human life.⁷ Reinhold

laid hold of the territory of epistemology (and later on, logic) in his attempt to create a positive “Kantian” system that was in some sense empirically based or “objective.” After a brief initial flirtation with Reinhold’s foundationalism, Fichte staked out the moral domain as his field of endeavor and sought to enlarge the phenomenon of conscience—on the model of Kant’s categorical imperative—into a model of world-embodied consciousness as such, closer to what we would today call “phenomenology” than other forms of contemporary philosophy. Schelling, schooled in Plato’s *Timaeus* as well as Kantian critique, sought to expand Kant’s fragmentary account of matter as impenetrability-in-space to a holistic account of the physical sciences, one based more on the emerging chemistry and biology of the new century than on Kant’s Newtonian materialism. And Hegel would take up Kant’s systematic leftovers—religion, social philosophy, economics, politics, and history—and fashion them into an account of human reality so bold and sweeping that it dropped the labels “transcendental” or “critical” and proclaimed itself absolute or objective idealism. But this suggestion considerably oversimplifies the matter, for Kant’s heirs did not parcel up the master’s domain and each set to work on his own claimed turf; each contended he was the sole inheritor of the whole estate and laid claim to transcendental philosophy from his own point of the compass. Our “history of philosophy”—an art invented by Reinhold, Schelling, and Hegel—tries to make sense of the tussle in a linear fashion, but neither chronological order nor the metaphor of spaces divided into different regions or by different directions quite succeeds in making clear sense of German philosophy from 1790 to 1820.⁸ Furthermore, although we must be content today to view philosophy as an autonomous although peripheral stage of human endeavor, the German-speaking lands of the early nineteenth century were guided by “public intellectuals” who were comfortable moving in multiple disciplines that we think widely disparate—religion and politics, philosophy and art, creative art and literary criticism, and even poetry and empirical science.

The End of Modernity: “Open Sky” or System?

[Even] after the labors of Kant and Reinhold, philosophy is still not a science. [Schulze’s] *Aenesidemus* has shaken my own system to its very foundations, and since one cannot very well live under the open sky, I was forced to construct a new system.

—J. G. Fichte, draft of a letter to J. F. Flatt, late 1793⁹

In many ways, the end of the eighteenth century in Europe was as disquieting and unnerving as it was filled with promise. Neither Kant’s high-flown transcendental arguments for a legislative role for intellect in human cognition nor Reinhold’s ordinary-language attempt to make the same point through an analysis of

representation that hovered somewhere between psychology and epistemology could counter the power of willful doubt. The old order was crumbling, the authority of established powers, political and ecclesiastical, was undercut, and a new spirit of experimentalism—neither as open or candid as Goethe’s Werther nor as certain and self-assertive as the never-aging Faust of that drama’s second part—took over the literary and scientific worlds. The world of knowledge was expanding, although not yet beyond the capacities of singular intellects of encyclopedic reach and genuine diversity; musicians became astronomers, poets became ministers of state, and newly minted scientific disciplines were captained by entrepreneurs working in carriage houses rather than universities. Although the cultivated celebrated the cult of “genius,” the mob was at work in the street below—or the country just over the border—and the world of learning was just waking to the subterranean movements of social groups, of economic activity and international trade, and of political organization and conflict. Fichte’s words echo the resolve of one who has no choice but to rebuild in just the place the earthquake has brought down the house. System, although perhaps claustrophobic or leaky (as Kierkegaard and Heidegger reminded us¹⁰) is at least shelter against the open sky of uncertainty and lack of direction. Whether one can find eternal foundations is a chancy prospect once one has been forced to give in to Galileo and admit that the earth moves.

The inflated rhetoric of one of Kant’s “deductions”—or of those constructed with such ingenuity by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in his footsteps—hides the absence of an interlocutor or the background murmur of the skeptic who finds talk of postulating unseen but necessary conditions for the possibility of experience every bit as obtuse as the flat-footed assertions of vulgar realists and idealists who claim they see “things” or “sensations.” Underneath the interminable deductions are dodgy starting-points and perplexing methodologies secured by uneasy comparisons to cognitive domains that we ordinarily think actually “work” such as mathematics or geometry. These scientific pretenders have put themselves in dignified dress and walk about in public as “synthetic method,” or “intellectual intuition,” or “dialectic”—but Heidegger tartly reminds us the apt riposte of the anti-systematic Friedrich Schlegel to the concept of a fundamental “dialectic of identity and difference”: “A definition which is not funny is not worthwhile.”¹¹ And if our professional philosophers are not often so loose as to find each others’ starting points and methodologies a matter of humor, they do pointedly ignore each others’ detailed arguments and go for the quick: to question whether the foundation or premises are clear and persuasive, or as the geometers say *are evident*, whether the argument in general is transparent or mere subterfuge, and hence whether the claimed result or *quod erat demonstrandum* actually follows. Whereas most academic philosophers were and are fairly confident that they can either charm or stupefy in the lecture hall, those who conduct their business in private correspondence are both more honest and direct. So

just as the wise reader will find it unprofitable to doze by the fire with the author of the *Meditations on First Philosophy* and will go to the *Objections and Replies* for some fresh air, the reader of the vast systems of the German idealists will turn to comments of public critics to get a handle on her authors, or, in our case, to the letters Fichte and Schelling exchanged in their “growth years,” where packed between tidbits of business and gossip—and some overwrought accusations and histrionics—one can find some earnest attempts to probe and uncover foundations and (un)certainities.

Just as Socratic *elenchus* and Platonic dialectic had as their social background the aggressive confrontations of that singular Greek invention, the law court, one might argue that the one-into-many, I-into-not-I, identity-into-difference, and I-into-We gymnastics of the new *dialectic* practiced by Kant’s successors had as much to do with the plurality of social voices and the social conflicts unleashed by Enlightenment and Revolution as with the self-undermining ratiocination that Kant diagnosed as the conduct of empty concepts loosed from the controls of sensible intuition. Before the political “old order” dissolved in the tumultuous events in France that began with the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* in 1789, the voices of enlightened social critics such as Hume and Adam Smith, Voltaire and Diderot, and Lessing and Herder had attacked the power of ancient institutions and entrenched beliefs and had begun to show that complex systems of human reason and sensibility, social organization and individual initiative, deployed over a spectrum of development that was both natural and historical, underpinned the emergence of “bourgeois man.” But the old order did not spontaneously combust or disintegrate into the chaos of the Parisian mob or the frenzied bloodbath of “public safety” officials, at least in German lands where some sense of sanctity, order, and history combined with “enlightened policy” and a penchant for learning kept the most progressive minds occupied in the corridors of power—seminaries, courts, and universities. Battles were fought, of course, but largely with the pen and not the sword.

The Quarrel Between Philosophy and *Poesie*

Unending free activity arises in us through free renunciation of the absolute—the only possible absolute that can be given us and that we only find through our inability to attain and know an absolute.

—Novalis, *Fichte Studies* #566¹²

One can frame the disagreements of Fichte and Schelling in the context of four notable debates or “culture-war” skirmishes that irrupted in German lands late in the eighteenth century, and that pitted literary giants, the so-called classicists

and romantics, against philosophers. The first two surround the “rehabilitation” of Spinoza, although perhaps the “re-” is a misnomer because even in the free-thinking low countries of the seventeenth century, Spinoza could not teach in any public way nor have visible disciples in the academy. The conversations on Spinoza between the Enlightenment dramatist, historian, critic, and advocate of religious tolerance Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and the younger anti-Kantian polemicist and novelist Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi that occurred in July 1780 touched off a thirty-year firestorm of pamphlets, tracts, and denunciations that generally are referred to as the “Pantheism Controversy.” Whether Lessing was engaging in sly humor or being quite sincere in confessing to Jacobi that he was a Spinozist—read “atheist,” “determinist,” “nihilist”—Jacobi was unambiguous in his response, which was to jump off the cliff of rationalism in hope that a *salto mortale* into the “I know not what” of faith (*Glaube*) would save him from the murky *hen kai pan* of Lessing and later the Jena romantics. The literary fracas between Jacobi and Lessing’s posthumous defender, Moses Mendelssohn, guaranteed that the very words “Spinoza,” “pantheism,” and “faith” provoked immediate reaction for decades to come, visible everywhere from Goethe’s *Faust* to the *Correspondence* between Fichte and Schelling, and even to Hegel’s *Faith and Knowledge*.¹³ Lessing and Jacobi’s conversations triggered a deep confrontation between skeptical and traditional voices in the “enlightened” world. The second contest was a repercussion of the first: By the 1790s, suddenly Spinoza was fashionable, even touted as the only logically consistent dogmatist, whether or not one wanted to stand with him. Everyone wanted to find some sort of “synthesis” of Spinozistic pantheism or determinism with whatever seemed to still work of the old humanism—the *Poesie* of the romantics, the voluntarism of the transcendental idealists, and the belief in religious inspiration among orthodox theologians. Whether these elements can be mixed without provoking inconsistency, laughter, or “dialectic,” everyone wanted to try his hand at it. Kant’s posthumous notes from quite late in his life suggest that even he dabbled with Spinozism. At one point he comments that Spinozism, with its “seeing all things in God,” is quite like transcendental idealism in wanting to adumbrate a system of all possible objects of experience under one principle; at another Kant calls Spinoza, Schelling, and Lichtenberg (a follower of Fichte and a *Naturphilosoph*) the “past, present, and future of transcendental philosophy.”¹⁴ Fichte’s letters to Schelling bristle with accusations of him being “soft on Spinozism.” Fichte had been offended at the young Schelling’s suggestion (in the 1775 *Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism*) that one could view Spinozism and Critical Philosophy as equally valid philosophies. For Fichte, one’s decision between the two will be led by one’s interest: If one is interested in *things* one will opt for Spinozism, if in becoming a free agent, for Criticism.¹⁵ At one point in the *Correspondence*, Schelling recalls an apparently damning line from Fichte’s 1794

Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre where the author suggests that the theoretical part of the *Wissenschaftslehre* is “Spinozism made systematic,” except that every I is itself the one substance.¹⁶

The latter two debates are more about means than ends, for everyone in Germany more or less agreed that Kant was on target with a morality of conscience or obligation rather than results, and that the synoptic view of reality promoted by the natural sciences could and should be reconciled with an updated humanism that integrated the private conscience of the individual and the social power of communities, economic association and small- and large-scale political entities. Friedrich Schiller and Fichte took different routes to a naturalistic morality of conscience, the former suggesting an aesthetic-psychological attunement of reason and sensibility as a tool for mass moral education, the latter dramatically bringing the Categorical Imperative from the philosophers’ Olympus down to the marketplace in a social philosophy that made the Other both the limit of my will and the remote source of the objectivity of all my perceptions. Schiller’s *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1793–1795) tempered the rigor of Kant’s uncompromising demands centered on universality, the dignity of the moral agent, and a projected social order that secured both freedom and dignity with the anthropological concerns about moral pedagogy and behavioral reinforcement; the empty play of opposed faculties that Kant had nodded to in his analysis of aesthetic creativity had a positive social function—education into a lively and motivating sense of human equality, free from the ambiguity of Kant’s term *autonomy*. What was essentially creative in Schiller’s reading of Kant was to use the *Third Critique* as a tool for reading Kant’s moral philosophy. Fichte’s philosophy is more centrally concerned with the moral order as envisioned by Kant himself, where the appearance of an other will opposite mine both limits my agency and provides the “push back” that shows up in cognition as the feeling of necessity (or “reality”) correlated with perception and in a natural order of “things” constructed from perceptions. That the other is the “limit of my will” is an idea that goes back to Moses Maimonides¹⁷; that both “my” will and that of putative others arises only in an intersubjective framework is a strikingly modern idea, especially because Fichte makes the *willing* that I am and the *constraint* of the other the primitive entities of his transcendental philosophy, much the way we commonly project biological, social, and primitive moral constraints as the basis of our neo-Darwinian anthropological explanations. The core of the social order and the legal framework that cements it is the shared intuition that “I must limit my freedom by the possibility of the freedom of the other.”¹⁸

A final disagreement concerns the different directions that the romantic writers and literary critics of Jena and the post-Kantian idealists took in fashioning an account of the realms of nature and freedom, and of the tension between

the role of the individual and the influence of the social whole in critically regulating human conduct. Although both Fichte and Schelling shared certain enthusiasms and especially political beliefs with the Jena romantics, there was a mutual distrust among them, based in part on the competition for public forums for their views. A good deal of the *Fichte-Schelling Correspondence* in 1800 and early in 1801 recounts intrigues around the founding and editorship of a “common front” journal that would generally advance the cause of transcendental philosophy and specifically review recent contributions in science, art, and letters that harmonized (or failed to harmonize) with the Kantian spirit. Beyond this competition for access to the educated public, the philosophers and literary spirits of Jena took decidedly different approaches to locating the source of human freedom, Fichte and Schelling in general looking to the tensions and movements of the social whole, while the poets, critics, and theologians of the Romantic Circle started and ended with the human individual.

G. F. P. Hardenberg (“Novalis”), for example, had a complicated relationship to Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre*. His earnest study of the 1794 *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre* propelled him, in the name of freedom, to a radically free-form, antisystematic form of philosophizing. Breaking with Fichte pointedly in the matter of form, Novalis advocated a micro-philosophy that encapsulated the whole of phenomenal reality—which Fichte had tried to catalog and laboriously “deduce—in the singular poetic insight. “An authentic philosophical system must systematize freedom and unendingness, or, to express it more strikingly, it must systematize systemlessness,” he writes in 1795–1796.¹⁹ Working on a complex theory of signs where an individual item or “trace” can function now as a subject, now as an object, Novalis attempts to capture the self-sundering, self-objectifying, and ultimately self-recognizing creativity of the Fichtean I as a play in which there is no privileged position: “Being, being-I, being free and oscillating are all synonyms—one expression refers to the others—it is simply the matter of a single fact.”²⁰

At the time that concerns us, Schelling was most influenced by Ludwig Tieck of all the Jena romantics, and it is probable that through Tieck and Novalis he became acquainted with the theosophical dramas of Jakob Böhme that would figure so prominently in his speculations on God, freedom, and the nature of evil that occupied his thought from 1809 to 1815. Through Böhme, Tieck introduced the idea of religious conversion, organic unity with nature, and the practice of highly idiosyncratic creativity or *Poesie* to the Jena circle.²¹ The retrieval of “old and curious things,” medieval religion included, was a mark of Tieck’s influence. *Poesie* was infinitely flexible in form, capable of retrieval of the past and prophetic flights to a utopian future. Its practitioners were not constrained, as were their philosophical fellow-travelers, to account for the world *as it is*, hence their unconventional, if not anarchic practices,

launched under the banner of the harmony of truth, beauty, and freedom. In romantic hands, fiction freed itself from verisimilitude and became prized as a world-transforming power.

Friedrich Schlegel was probably the most philosophically erudite author of the Romantic Circle. Between 1796 and 1801 he attended Fichte's lectures and undertook lengthy studies of Kant, Herder, Fichte, and Spinoza. His philosophy is as nonfoundationalist and antisystematic as that of Hardenberg and its mode of expression even more striking. He championed an ideal of art as "formed chaos," and prized wit, irony, and narratives incapable of definite interpretation as the ways to open up an infinity of perspectives. Schlegel's idea of romantic "form" was universal and all-embracing, committed to mixing genres and overturning fixed convention. Like Novalis, his reaction to Fichte's endless and tightly wrought deductions involved the deliberate antithesis, the embrace of the fragment, which "like a small work of art, has to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world and be complete in itself like a hedgehog."²² Schlegel's idea of philosophical system—quite unlike Fichte's 1794 three ground-principles or the flexible mixed method of the 1796/1799 *nova methodo* lectures where intellectual intuition, hypothesis, deduction, and bridging synthesis are all deployed to bring one as near as possible to the whole truth²³—was blatantly circular, and open to using not only alternative proofs but alternative concepts. Essentially agreeing with Novalis that "Everywhere we seek the unconditioned [*das Unbedingte*], but find only things [*Dinge*]," Schlegel finds in the romantic work of art a complete universe, an exercise of creativity that, freed from the external reference of classical canons or conventional realism, provides its own criterion and that erases the boundary between the work of art and criticism.²⁴ Most importantly for our concerns, Schlegel hoped to produce a synthesis of Fichte's philosophy of freedom with Spinoza's naturalism, a hope shared by Schelling at least in the years 1799 to 1801.²⁵

"Atheism" and the Turn Toward Philosophical Religion

True atheism, genuine unbelief and godlessness, consists in pettifogging over the consequences of one's actions, of refusing to hearken to the voice of one's own conscience. . . . The living and efficaciously acting moral order is itself God. We require no other God, nor can we grasp any other.

—J. G. Fichte, *On the Basis of Our Belief in a Divine Governance of the World* (1798)²⁶

If these words had not forced Fichte to resign his professorship in Jena and depart for Berlin in June 1799, we would not have the remarkable series of letters that passed between Fichte and Schelling in the succeeding two years.

In effect, Fichte had fired himself from the tolerant University of Jena rather than receive a “slap on the wrist” reprimand from the Weimar Court over his publication of a blatantly atheistic article by F. K. Forberg in his *Philosophical Journal* entitled “On the Development of the Concept of Religion,” which he prefaced with his own essay that was rather tame by Enlightenment standards and not far removed from the spirit, if not the letter, of Kant’s moral religion. Academic freedom was well-respected at Jena, although the Weimar Court had technically acceded to the demands of the Saxony Court, which in response to the complaints of an outraged parent, had ordered all copies of the offending essays seized and destroyed and threatened to withdraw all its students from Jena. With characteristic overreaction, Fichte had announced beforehand that he would resign if censured, and so he removed himself from the hotbed of transcendental idealism that Jena had become in the 1790s to a life of relative obscurity in Berlin. Weimar issued its pro-forma rescript with an acceptance of Fichte’s resignation appended.²⁷

There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Fichte’s claim in 1798 that we can grasp no God other a living and effective moral order, but as his thinking unfolds from 1799 to 1802, much more ontological weight accrues to this entity or force that comes to be viewed as the ground of what humans experience as consciousness, nature, and the intersubjective nest of right, obligation, and moral demand. In *The Vocation of Man* (1800) Fichte begins to speak of “faith” (*Glaube*), the situation where the actual world is seen as ringed by and determined through the immediate consciousness of a preorientation of our freedom and power toward a rational end, the future perfection of humanity. “We act not because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act.”²⁸ The finite I is fundamentally *will* or deed, its own act, and causal chains of consequences extend from it not only in the world of appearance but in an invisible or intelligible order. One can only think of a harmonization of such agents in an “absolute will,” whose function is to be the bond of the spiritual world and enable will to act upon will. Whether this “absolute will” is really another will or just an abstract aspect of my will in double appearance as the voice of conscience commanding me to respect the Other and my pure obedience to the command, it is clear that Fichte’s absolute will is a “moral God” as figured in this popular work. The Infinite Will is itself the moral order.²⁹

The unity-and-community of willing that Fichte sketches in 1800 looks quite a bit like Leibniz’s kaleidoscope of monads refracting and apparently interacting with one another on the ground of a prime monad or cosmic actor-presenter. Fichte struggles to give a properly philosophical account of this “intelligible world” over the next two years. His letters to Schelling repeatedly turn to the promise that the elaboration of the intelligible realm will clarify all obscurities in the *Wissenschaftslehre*, or to talk of a “final synthesis.” Schelling confesses he cannot follow this new “doctrine of religion” and so can do no

more than suspend judgment on the *Wissenschaftslehre* in its current incomplete form.³⁰ But Fichte sporadically persisted in his attempts to think through this ultimate ground in theoretical terms as the ground of consciousness. In one letter to Schelling, he notes there is a huge difference between embedding a system in a “fundamental reflex” (*Grundreflex*) and trying to ground a system on “reflection.”³¹ He does not there explain what the difference is, but in the 1800 *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, he provides several hints: the *Grundreflex* is what Kant called the “I think” that necessarily accompanies all definite acts of consciousness, or the omnipresent activity that precedes all consciousness as its necessary condition. It is also called the self-determining intuition prior to the I’s determined consciousness that displays itself in finite states of consciousness and actions, or the “pure reflex” that is prior to the subject.³² The “Historical Narrative” of the early pages of this manuscript refers back to concepts like the “self-reversion” of the 1794 *Foundations* and the “agility” and “intellectual intuition” of the *nova methodo* lectures given from 1796 to 1799.³³

The *New Version* is a fragmentary manuscript, and to illuminate it one must turn to an even stranger manuscript, the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1801–1802. Here Fichte’s late-found philosophical theism reaches its apogee in the idea of an absolute being, related to the absolute knowing that the *Wissenschaftslehre* reconstructs by a “hiatus” or chasm”; *inside* absolute knowing, being is indeed related to knowing, but this relation is grounded in the absolute or *being* itself, not in knowing.³⁴ In one passage, the “*Grundreflex*” seems to be given a clear and unambiguous meaning, but one that associates it with “absolute being” rather than the consciousness-associated descriptors of “agility” or “self-reversion” or Kant’s ever-self-present “I think”:

Lastly, what was the ground of this idea of a closed system of mutually determined intelligences, determined in the pure thought of reason-intuition and the perception-thought derived from it? It was absolute being itself, which conditions knowing—and is hence an absolute mutual penetration of the two. The deepest root of all knowing is the unattainable union of *pure* thought and the thought of the perception that we have described. This [union] equals the moral law, the most sublime case of all intuition, since it comprehends intelligence as its own absolute real-ground. This union is absolutely not a matter of this or that kind of knowing, but absolute knowing, simply as such.³⁵

Although he initially mocked Fichte’s theistic turn,³⁶ Schelling soon enough found it easy to turn from talk of an absolute identity that is the ground of all

quantitative difference among appearances (an “indifference” or neither-nor of all possible predicates and states) back to the name “God,” whose philosophical meaning Kant had glossed as the compendium of all possible predicates.³⁷ Prompted by the naturalist and mathematician Carl Eschenmayer, who argued that identity-philosophy provided not a steep ascent to the absolute, but a highway to a base-camp from which any further journey must be undertaken not by philosophy but by faith,³⁸ Schelling begins to call the “absolute” God in his 1804 *Philosophy and Religion*, and to make moves to clarify his rather imprecise and “personal” idea of *intellectual intuition*: Intellectual intuition is not: (a) a perception of inner sense that finite understanding turns into a concept, (b) a compendium of all possible predicates, their universal disjunction, or (c) the common element in all predicates, a private, psychological event.³⁹ Schelling provides a more precise positive discussion in the 1804 lectures on *The System of Philosophy in General*. It involves a five-step argument that starts from three theses put forward in the 1801 *Presentation of My System*:

1. Knowing involves identity of knower and known,
2. Reason transcends subjectivity or personality,
3. Reason’s sole rule is the law of identity,

and adds two new theses:

4. God is the content of reason’s self-recognizing self-affirmation,
and
5. This self-affirmation involves insight into the impossibility of nihilism and so answers Leibniz’s fundamental question: “Why is there something rather than nothing?”⁴⁰

Thus understood, intellectual intuition delivers an impersonal and atemporal background of reason free of subjectivity; it supplies only modal necessity, not the kind of knowledge mediated by perception that can result in existential propositions. Whether at this high altitude of discussion there is any convergence between Fichte’s *Grundreflex* and Schelling’s intellectual intuition—or whether the one is inevitably still “idealistic” and the other “realistic”—is something that cannot be decided here. It seems a contest between a claimed *omnipresent* intuition “I think” that accompanies every concrete state of mind and an unavoidable horizon of thinking that must always pronounce “There must be something rather than nothing.” Put into propositions, each formula delivers a distorted version of a fundamental experience, a completely global horizon of consciousness, or an identically infinite horizon of being.

“The Difference” Between Fichte and Schelling, 1800–1802

One cannot proceed from a *being* . . . , but one has to proceed from a *seeing*.

—Letter 19, Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in
Jena, May 31 to August 7, 1801

The *Correspondence* that this volume presents as an introduction to a handful of crucial works of both philosophers in the pertinent years is full of the chaos of life, as well as earnestness of thought. We bypass the matters of personalities and publishers,⁴¹ and head straight for the most problematic issue: Although both parties contend there is but *one difference* that separates them, each phrases it differently or sidesteps the issue and instead discusses minor difficulties that present themselves at the moment, perhaps in what the other party said in the last letter.

By way of introduction to the letters, we can list three candidates for “the difference” that are relatively distinct as long as we treat them abstractly. In any given patch of the discussion, they may be intermingled or interwoven. It is natural in cataloging the shortcomings of an adversary, or a friend who has brought disappointment, to move from one offense to the other, and this is typically the way the episodes of “pure” philosophizing in the letters unfold.

The Status of Being in Transcendental Idealism

Fichte took up the Kantian heritage in a doubly idealistic way, adopting not only the general methodology of transcendental explanation but taking the Kantian analysis of moral obligation as the key clue for deciphering the nature of consciousness. Unlike most of modern philosophy up to Reinhold, the primitive data for Fichtean phenomenology are not “representation” and the subject that has the representation; instead, there is a single situation in which the self-activity of an agent finds itself limited, strives to push back one and every boundary, and comes to a satisfaction at once limited and extensive in an intersubjective context of recognition and realization shared by many finite subjects. Representation floats on a dynamic surface of interactions that morph into the biological and psychological phenomena of embodied consciousness—feelings, strivings, drives—and only on top of that interactive basis can “objects” and “perceptions” be established. The 1794 *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre*, a provisional student handout that was liable to be misread in several important ways, needed to be read backwards to reveal this doubly idealist perspective: there are no things as such, no presentations either, no stationary states of being, and no beings.

Schelling's early essays moved in the more conventional framework of Kantian epistemology, with subjects and objects, representations and entities, categories and intuitions treated in a conventional or reified manner. Schelling's chief argument for the subjectivity of the absolute, as he imagined it early on, was the impossibility of an infinite entity being an object or having thing-like existence. Hence, although both Fichte's and Schelling's philosophical ambitions were of similarly wide or systematic scope, from the very first Fichte's path was to fashion the *Wissenschaftslehre* from within, from self-activity and self-intuition, while Schelling worked on a vast fresco deployed over an external assemblage of objects, fundamentally alien even though artistry could transform them into a temple of spirit. This preference for thought over live intuition, for being or being-determined over self-determination endlessly irritated Fichte, although Schelling on his part did not react well to numerous hints, direct, indirect, and some even delivered by way of written comments to third parties, that he "didn't get it."⁴²

The heart of the face-off over the priority of intuition or being in transcendental philosophy comes fairly late in the exchange, after Fichte has read and commented on Schelling's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*. Commenting on Schelling's new standpoint, Fichte maintains that the new system has being or an absolute real ground as its principle, even if that principle is given the lofty name "reason." Philosophy, he argues, must proceed from a *seeing*, not a *being*. If it starts from anything other than a living intuition of self-activity ("intellectual intuition"), it is simply realism, a greater or lesser sketch of Spinozism, and is quite unable to account for freedom or spontaneous activity and the consciousness that derives from it.⁴³ Schelling's reply suggests there is no privileged access to an underlying realm of activity or spontaneous self-reversion in consciousness; Fichte simply starts from the surface phenomena of apparent freedom and deduces his way to an ultimate real ground, but the procedure is arbitrary and invented, much like Kant's concoction of moral philosophy between the bookend postulates of freedom and God. Schelling proceeds to undiplomatically poke fun at the *Vocation of Man* for locating the real ground wholly beyond the realm of knowing, in *faith*. He suggests that as early as the 1795 *Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism* he has, perhaps inarticulately and "sentimentally," pointed beyond idealism to a reconciling element, being, which truly comprehends both itself and its other.⁴⁴ The *Letters* had been an early flashpoint between the two philosophers; in reply to Schelling's contention that one can arbitrarily choose to be a realist or idealist, and that both constructions may have useful purchase, Fichte argued in the 1797 *First Introduction* that one's character will dictate the choice of one's philosophy, and that only a person too slack to be interested in freedom will opt for a world-picture that makes him a thing among things. "The kind of philosophy one chooses thus depends on

the person one is. For a philosophical system is not a lifeless household item one can put aside or pick up as one wishes; instead it is animated by the very soul of the person who adopts it.”⁴⁵

The Role of Nature in Freedom

As soon as Schelling began to develop a philosophy of nature under the aegis of transcendental philosophy in 1797, Fichte became uneasy. When he studied the 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism*, he was troubled both by the way that work granted explanatory priority to nature rather than consciousness, and way nature seemed to be viewed *alongside* consciousness as an independent domain. Following Kant’s concept of matter as the impenetrable occupation of space based on the interaction of one activity with another, Schelling constructs a model of nature developed from graduated levels of dynamic action and interaction. Fichte finds this contrary to the method of transcendental idealism, where intelligence arises not from brute interactions of unintelligent forces, but, as in moral agency, from *self-limitation*.⁴⁶ He writes to Schelling that transcendental philosophy cannot grant an independent status to nature—or to consciousness either. It must instead *fictionally* construct both from the same real-ideal activity of the I. Nature can appear to *Wissenschaftslehre* only as something found, finished, perfected—operating according to the laws of intelligence because it has been abstracted from intelligence and nurtured as a fictional construct.⁴⁷ One could infer that whatever activity and development are found in nature come from the artistry inherent in science.

Schelling response gives notice to Fichte that his anxieties are *not* misplaced. Rather than acknowledge that *Wissenschaftslehre* and philosophy are coextensive, Schelling regards the former as a propaedeutic to the latter. Philosophy arises only when the philosopher abstracts from the subjectivity that posited the subject-object in an ideal or psychological mode and proceeded to examine the human faculties of mind; the abstraction evidently threshes the activity found in *Wissenschaftslehre* from its personal hull and enables the philosopher to work with the “pure” subject-object, the principle of theoretical or natural philosophy. Only as a result of observing and describing the self-construction of reality in nature-philosophy can the philosopher, in a separate-but-equal transcendental science, launch into the construction of consciousness on the basis of organic and animate nature. Schelling points in his introduction to the genetically organized *System of Transcendental Idealism* proper as the place where he signaled the equiprimordial status of transcendental and natural philosophies and cut himself loose from the “mere logic” of Fichte’s construction.⁴⁸ The essential structure of identity-philosophy, which Schelling will unveil in the spring of the next year, is in place: Philosophy is a tripartite but organic whole, introduced by a logic

or abstract metaphysics of identity, and fleshed out by two complementary real-philosophies, those of nature and of consciousness.

Fichte's first reply is a letter he left unsent.⁴⁹ His displeasure is quite evident. The best that philosophy of nature can do to *explain* nature is to analogically import the vitality of consciousness into nature; that may produce a heuristic account *for* the actor-observer, but it nowhere touches anything outside of finite consciousness. Although in this sense, nature can be explained from consciousness, the reverse will never occur. Consciousness is *sui generis*, and any attempt to back away from this lands one in the muddled Spinozism of Schlegel and Schleiermacher, or the even more muddled realism of Reinhold and Bardili.⁵⁰ Fichte penned and sent a quieter response that simply noted that Schelling's philosophy of nature does not follow from the principles of transcendental idealism, as previously understood, but would require an expansion of those principles. The "transcendental philosophy of the intelligible" that he soon hoped to write, would provide such an expansion.⁵¹ The unsent draft supplies more detail on how this *might* happen: Previous versions of the *Wissenschaftslehre* brought to light the nature of *finite* consciousness, the awareness of an apparently external reality sandwiched between activity that manifests as feeling and the command of conscience. A theory of the intelligible world would expand the account to the *noumenal order*, and Fichte seems to give hope to the idea that nature could be given a philosophical account on the basis of this noumenal activity, which he also calls "God."⁵²

In the 1800 *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* there is mention of the author's intent to oppose Schelling's *separate* philosophy of nature, but aside from the general line of argumentation, that object-consciousness—hence object-oriented presentation or activity—necessarily presupposes an immediate self-consciousness that is prereflexive and cannot itself be an object of consciousness, no clear line of argument against Schelling's view of nature is formulated.⁵³ In the preface to his 1801 *Presentation of My System*, Schelling made clear that he had always presented philosophy of nature *alongside* transcendental philosophy, not as subordinate to it or derived from anything less than the "absolute identity" or "indifference" of the natural and the transcendental that the new system asserts. Although in letters to Fichte he contends that conscious intelligence is just a higher potency of activity in nature, and hence in some sense emergent from natural organization,⁵⁴ *My System* concludes its Spinozistic deduction of absolute identity and the framework of nature with the promise to first *purify* activity in organic nature until the account arrives at the absolute indifference-point, and from there construct a separate wholly *positive* account of the three levels that displayed themselves *negatively* in inorganic and animate nature. It is not quite clear whether at this point in his philosophical development, Schelling thinks that consciousness exists *alongside* nature or as *part* of nature

or as *emergent* within nature.⁵⁵ It is clear, however, that none of these versions of “naturalism” are acceptable to Fichte.

Although Fichte’s reading notes of *Schelling’s* new system do not often refer to nature, the 1801–1802 *Wissenschaftslehre* demonstrates a positive attempt on Fichte’s part to refute what he takes to be the strongest form of Schelling’s naturalism—the *emergent* or *developmental* view that consciousness rests on, presumes, and in some sense is dependent on its organic basis in nature. One can perhaps *think of* consciousness as originating in some primordial freedom, he argues, but one cannot *perceive* that it *has* originated in that way; there is no necessity accompanying the thought, and so no objectivity lending weight to the hypothesis.⁵⁶ Nature *need be* conceived as no more than an interworking of mechanical drives, a play of nonlocal forces universally permeating the whole of being and thus coercing it uniformly in every point; conscious agency, however, presupposes individual points of agency and efficacy, hence the capacity for novelty and *starting anew* that we call “freedom.” Nature is uniform and homeostatic, whereas the social order is differentiated and sometimes erratic, hence a field of singular actions performed by plural agents. Nature is the domain of the all-alike, whereas the ethical order is a harmonization of unique individuals.⁵⁷ Fichte at one point offers a definite contrast between the *Wissenschaftslehre* and what he calls the “new Spinozism”: “Knowing is supposed to come about as a necessary consequence of nature, a higher power of nature—taking the term in a sense that extends all the way to empirical being. But this contradicts the inner nature of knowing, which is to be absolute origination, a coming into being from the essence of freedom, not of being.”⁵⁸

Philosophical Methodology: Transcendental or Absolute Idealism?

Although Fichte and Schelling seem almost viscerally focused on rejecting each other’s approach to explaining nature and freedom (as universal and singular modes of activity), a subtler difference between the two concerns the question of philosophical methodology, or in their jargon, “intellectual intuition” and “philosophical construction.” Each tries to convince the other that his efforts have a credible and solid Kantian basis—Schelling refers to the *Third Critique’s* discussion of reason’s demand for unconditioned necessary, Fichte to the *First Critique’s* picture of knowing as a synthesis of concepts and intuitions. Fichte clarifies his more recent thoughts about methodology in the *Announcement* for the *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* as an active but systematic knowing, a *mathesis* proceeding in something like geometrical “evidence,” whose every element is an intuition.⁵⁹ Indeed, Fichte had previously rejected the idea that a “thought” is anything other than an arrested intuition, a single frame snipped from the cinematic flow of the I’s essentially self-reverting activity or *agility*.⁶⁰

Schelling seems to have a slightly more conceptual approach, even when he uses the same term, “intellectual intuition,” for his version of reason-intuition is a convergence of ultimate opposites—knower and known, subject and object, universality and particularity—which merge in an ultimately self-actualizing idea, something like the old metaphysical idea of the ontological proof of God’s existence, but this time done from God’s stance, not from the outside, and resulting in something more dynamic and illuminating than “certainty” about an outside entity’s existence.⁶¹ Although he does not use Fichte’s language of freedom and act to speak of reason and its work, what Schelling does say of it presumes a contemplative activity in the reader that ultimately sparks into the experience of the convergence of knower and known. The first nine theorems of the 1801 *Presentation of My System* are extraordinarily difficult in that they wall the reader round with ultimate abstractions—“reason,” “identity,” “the absolute”—which demand sacrifice of reflection, subjectivity, and personal point of view if they are to be conceived at all. It is perhaps with some justification that Fichte complains of this systematic starting-point that it lacks all evidence unless one assumes things smuggled in from the *Wissenschaftslehre*.⁶² One can imagine his agitated state of mind when he writes of the whole attempt: “*Polyphemus without an eye*.”⁶³

From his side, Schelling seems to have no detailed knowledge of the starting-point and methodology of Fichte’s *second* Jena system, delivered in the *nova methodo* lectures of 1796/1799 and put before the public in but a few scant pages published in 1797⁶⁴; he seems to take the 1794 *Foundations* as the definitive, not the initial, form of Fichte’s system. Fichte’s “intellectual intuition” involves grasping that the I that is *self-conscious* when it is conscious of *something* is immediately and indubitably conscious of itself. This is Kant’s “*I think*” that accompanies all representations, and it is the transcendental ground of all representations, all object-consciousness. It is transcendental, not empirical; were it empirical, one would have an endless regress of new states that grasped the *last* state of consciousness, but never self-consciousness. When one responds to the command, “think yourself,” one has self-consciousness, and the reason that is so is because, first, one *does* the I, and second, one interrupts the previous flow of states of consciousness with the novelty of the response to the command. Fichte’s argument is not about Cartesian certainty or claimed self-access; it is about activity, spontaneity, and agility intuited in immediate self-consciousness. Descartes’ meditative claims were first-order and his “*I think*” is empirical; Fichte’s intellectual intuition, as he tries to clarify in a very difficult letter to Schelling, is second-order, and although immediate, it is more fundamental, one might say ever present, than any empirical state of mind or object-cognition.⁶⁵ On this basis, Fichte can say that Schelling is correct in talking about the identity of knowing and being on a relative, that

is, first-order or empirical, level. But such a correct grasp of relative truth is just half-truth and will not provide the systematic foundation for transcendental idealism that they both seek.

It is curious that Fichte writes to Schelling on these methodological matters with such assurance, or that the writings of 1797 lay out such an impeccably simple path to intellectual intuition and the I that performs it. When one turns to the fragmentary sketches of the 1800 *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, one sees a writer tormented by doubts about whether he can communicate what he thinks, or even whether he can steadily and clearly think what he intermittently thinks. Schelling never lacks self-assurance, but the round-about way he expounds intellectual intuition and its object (i.e., the indifference absolute that is the neither-nor of all possible predicates) leaves him open to Fichte's charge that his method is wholly conceptual, nothing other than reflection or discursive intellect seeking to heal the rift in reflection itself and so unable to get beyond a purely conceptual formula: the *neither–nor* of knowing and being, or subject and object, and so on.

Schelling's best explanation of intellectual intuition in 1801–1802 is buried in a footnote summary that links the two segments of his essays on methodology that were separated in different issues of his journal. There he says:

Since reason is challenged to conceive the absolute neither as thought nor as being, but still to think it, a contradiction arises for reflection since it conceives the absolute as *either* a case of thinking *or* one of being. But intellectual intuition enters even into this contradiction and produces the absolute. In this breakthrough lies the luminous point where the absolute is positively intuited.⁶⁶

The passage goes on to explain that although the function of intuition is thus negative within reflection, within philosophical construction it is positive and actually exhibits the absolute as a process of interweaving opposites (*Ineinsbildung*)—an analogy with the work of the imagination guided by aesthetic genius that produces totality in finite form and reconciles opposites in one concrete shape.⁶⁷ This sounds more prosaic than Fichte's unearthing of the primordial self-consciousness underneath all acts of consciousness, but note that there is a tacit appeal to subjectivity or personal experience in the word “breakthrough” and a tacit invocation of “genius” that the word *Ineinsbildung* brings with it. But should the philosopher take her stand with the mystic and the artistic creator as part of the ruling elite, or is the call to selfhood and freedom implicit in living in a republic of laws and a community of those bound by morality a more universal and shareable experience? In either case, it seems there must be some empirical analog to anchor transcendental philosophy.

J. G. Fichte/F. W. J. Schelling

Correspondence (1800–1802)

1. Schelling in Bamberg to Fichte in Berlin, May 14, 1800

Bamberg, 14th May 1800

My dear friend,

I am using my first quiet moment here in Bamberg to write to you.¹ No doubt you have received my article against the A.L.Z., and I hope that on the whole it has met with your approval.²

The following information is obviously more important for you: Reinhold's³ review of Bardili's *Logik* (perhaps it is already published) is supposed to be a new strike against us.⁴ This wind-tossed reed is now apparently an adherent of Bardili's [system], just as he was formerly an adherent of yours. That remains to be seen. In the meantime I hope you have had the opportunity to do some work on your essay against Bardili, which as you predicted is now more urgent than ever. On the other hand, I ask you to leave me to deal with the Reinhold review; an analysis of it will constitute a nice supplement to the second edition of my text against the *Literatur Zeitung*, which will soon be necessary. And all the more so, because in the text I have designated Reinhold as someone who should no longer have the honor of reviewing for the L.Z. If his review is put together in the way the victory cry of the editors leads me to believe it is, then it is high time to snap this reed in two. He was a feeble support for our cause anyway.

Please write to me about this when you get the chance. Also, please feel free to draw my attention to anything for the announced second edition, or to contribute something if you wish. I do not know how far along you are with your plan for a critical journal raised to the second power, but if you are still thinking about carrying it out, now would be the time.

Please excuse the haste of this letter on account of the enormous distractions that I have been caught up in ever since arriving here.

Gabler has orders to send you soon a vellum copy of my *Transcendental Philosophy*, a copy of the *Einleitung zur Naturphilosophie*, and the second issue of my *Zeitschrift*.⁵ I would be especially grateful if you could give me your opinion of the first two works.⁶

In deep friendship and with heartfelt respect,

Yours sincerely,
Schelling.

2. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Bamberg, June 9, 1800

Berlin, 9th June 1800

Heartfelt thanks for your thoughtful gesture, my dear friend.⁷

I have read your text⁸ with pleasure, yet also with *the* regret that a thinker who surely has better things to do at the moment than occupy himself with the eyesores of literature is still sometimes obliged to do so.

I have no doubt that you will win your case against Schütz and that would be most welcome.⁹ Make sure you publish the proceedings. That is the only way to have any effect on those philistines whose nature and type I have had ample opportunity to become acquainted with here.

I cannot tell you how long it will be before *I* can get to work on the review of Bardili's *Logik*.¹⁰ I still have not read the review in the A.L.Z., but only found an absurd letter here in Berlin from Reinhold that I have left *unanswered*.¹¹ I am going to make a complete break with that pitiful creature (I mean Reinhold) and suggest you do the same. Do what you see fit, you are guaranteed of my entire support and interest in advance.

We should not be too hasty about carrying out our plan. I have in mind and am counting on a rich man whom I have met by chance and who urgently requests me to give him private lessons.¹²

I am grateful for and deeply cherish your continuing friendship,

Yours,
Fichte.

Resident at Königsgraben 17.

To Professor Schelling from Jena, presently in Bamberg.

3. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Bamberg, August 2, 1800.

Berlin, 2nd August 1800.

If you look at the enclosed printed text, my dear friend, you will find that I have been recently working on our critical plan.¹³ Upon my arrival in

Berlin I discovered a similar plan at Unger's that had been passed on to me, and which I have recast, as you can see.¹⁴

It is obvious that I can count on you, particularly for the main subject of the *philosophy of nature*, of which you wanted to provide a critical overview. Could you give me an idea when it might be possible for you to send the description of nature?

For the first volume, could I ask you to especially do something on the *fundamentals of a philosophy of mathematics*, as well as a *philosophy of history*? Regarding the latter, please do not simply deduce it in a transcendental manner, but particularly consider its practical applications, including the questions: what is a real fact (to avoid the premises of conjectural histories) and which real facts belong in a system of history, of human history, of political history, and so on.

There is of course no general editor, but whoever is allocated a subject will be in charge of it and have the final say. This means that each of us is free to choose his own collaborators, and will of course be responsible for checking their contributions. Mr. Hermann, the former editor of the A.D. Bibl., will look after the correspondence.¹⁵

Would you kindly tell me your decision as soon as possible and the conditions for your participation? I'm sure Unger will not hesitate to fulfill the latter.

With much respect and devotion

Yours,
Fichte

The existence of such a plan should become known only upon the publication of the first issue. All the invited collaborators are therefore requested to exercise the utmost discretion: and the plan should be sent only to them.

At Königsgraben no. 17.

4. Schelling in Bamberg to Fichte in Berlin, August 18, 1800

Bamberg, 18th August 1800

I am replying to your letter¹⁶ only now, my highly esteemed friend, because I preferred to await the arrival of your invitation to Schlegel.¹⁷ You could not have known that he is here, and hence you addressed it to Jena, but it has now arrived.

The reason why I wanted to wait for the invitation, however, is the following:

After my last conversation with you I was of the firm belief that you wanted to give up the idea of a new Critical Institute and had scaled back your entire plan to a journal dealing with reviews and other reviewing journals. In the intervening time, when I visited Cotta in June during my trip to Swabia,

I entered into contract with him to edit a “Revision der neuesten Fortschritte der Philosophie und der von ihr abhängigen Wissenschaften.”¹⁸ I thought about doing (at least for my part and in this particular field) what I imagined to have been given up on the whole. Now it is true that Cotta mentioned something to me about a more general plan that he had discussed with Schlegel. But because I believed it had been put on hold, there seemed to be no reason to stop me implementing my more limited plan. However, after speaking in more detail with Schlegel, I discovered that the Institute—whose plan he had drawn up—was also going to start in 1801. And since it now appears doubly important to join our forces, I thought it a good idea to integrate my work into the larger group.¹⁹

So it is unfortunate to learn of your plan only now after I have fully committed myself to Cotta. Nevertheless, I still hope to convince you to be a part of Cotta’s plan, and for you to participate in it in a more specific and extensive manner than even what Schlegel had dared to hope. I can assure you that more than three years ago in Leipzig Cotta informed me about his long-held idea of a more liberal institute that would not only review single works but entire disciplines. For this reason he is much more deserving than Unger to be the entrepreneur of this new institute. Without your intervention Unger’s plan would have doubtlessly remained a flimsy narrow-minded product typical of Berlin. He has even more right on account of his personal interest in the matter, which cannot be said of such a refined book publisher as Unger. Cotta is independent of foreign influences and inconsiderateness, and best of all he possesses the means to quickly generate a reputation, renown and solidity for an institute of this kind.—I am convinced that if you weigh up all these aspects you will find yourself more inclined to Cotta, for Unger has at most only your word, while we on the other hand are all contracted to Cotta. I know the latter very well, and I feel that he alone is a publisher worthy of publishing a common effort that comes from us all.

The first volume will contain from me an “*Übersicht des ganzen gegenwärtigen Zustandes der Philosophie*,”²⁰ which is already partly written, and an appendix with an analysis of Bardili, Reinhold (and if no one else takes it, perhaps Jacobi as well, because of his open letter to you, and because of the patent influence he had on the dreadful review of my *System of Idealism* in the *Lit. Zeitung*).²¹ And since I can scarcely doubt that you will not join forces with us, I ask you to quickly inform me of your decision and what you would like to contribute, so that I can best organize everything.

I commend myself to your enduring good will and am, with deepest respect,

Yours,
Schelling.

5. Schelling in Bamberg to Fichte in Berlin, September 5, 1800

Bamberg, September 5, 1800.

I have waited in vain for a letter from you until today, my deeply revered friend! However, yesterday Schlegel received a letter from Schleiermacher in which the latter mentioned a conversation he had had with you about the new institute. A number of things communicated to me from this letter appear to indicate a misunderstanding, for which I am extremely sorry. This is probably the fault of my last letter, where I failed to go into sufficient detail about this plan.²²

The plan drawn up by Schlegel²³ is not of such a kind that it excludes yours, or that the two plans have opposite goals. This is self-evident. It is a single plan drawn up by two different people. Schlegel did nothing other than engineer the external conditions to bring it about—the requisite number of collaborators and the publisher—and even though he did not agree with you in every point, as little as I did (as you will recall), e.g., apart from works of art, everything has to be integrated into general overviews, the spirit of the two plans is still the same, and this spirit belongs equally to each and everyone of us. All of us are impatient to see an end to the shallowness, superficiality and empty-headedness prevalent in science and art, and the dullness prevalent in criticism. I do not know what led Schlegel to assume you had totally renounced your idea for such a plan, but he naturally still thought it possible to carry out one in his own manner. I do not know whether you clearly told him, not to mention me as well, why exactly you thought your plan to be unrealizable, but this is what he seems to have concluded from your remarks; and I am convinced that the few divergences from your first plan are not to blame for his failure to immediately inform you about the steps he had undertaken for its realization.

For my part I was infinitely pleased to read in your letter²⁴ that you have remained faithful to the idea and that your thoughts were heading in the same direction. The others are just as pleased, since they strongly hoped that you might participate in a more thorough and extensive manner than would have been the case according to your plan. Hence, the *matter* at hand has not changed, and it would be extremely regrettable if this were to happen. The only reason for you to reject our overtures would be the elements in the second plan that diverge from your first plan.²⁵ I really hope that this is not the case, and I believe it is necessary to inform you about a few ideas concerning them, which might help you to agree with them.

Right at the beginning, at least when I only had your plan before my eyes, it seemed that a single editor would not suffice to comprehend such a large (and in a few points even more heterogeneous) whole formed by the two poles of contemporary culture: science and art. You even wanted an individual editor-in-chief for every particular discipline, but it seems to me that one main

editor for the domain of science, and one for the domain of art would be sufficient. If you agree to this division [of labor] and there are no other reasons stopping you, then you owe it to science to take on the first role, since we all recognize that you alone are worthy of this, and because of your authority the world would also not harbor any doubts about you holding this position. Schlegel would be responsible for the second function, and would certainly not be out of place in his field.

You yourself have dispensed with the subordination of editors-in-chief and sub-editors in your new plan, and think that each individual participant should be responsible for himself. In that case the function of the two main editors would consist in the following:

1) *One* of the main editors would of course have to look after the mere mechanical aspects of the arrangements, the correspondence, and the editorship itself. Schlegel is happy to take on this side of things, since he is more skilled at this than all of us, and we could obviously rely on his meticulousness.

2) All the projects carried out in the institute either belong to the field of science or to the field of art or to both. You would have the deciding negative vote in the first field, Schlegel in the second, and both of you in the third—e.g., if a position or an article cannot be accepted. If the author disagrees with this and can provide good reasons, then the majority of the collaborators in the field concerned would have to decide, except in cases where political agendas come into play and where the agreement of two editors suffices.

3) In my opinion, the work of taking stock of all the noteworthy writings at the different book fairs belongs to the mere mechanical aspects of the editorship. The choice of these works may be settled by either the collaborators themselves, or if, as may be expected, there remain important things in one or the other domain that have not been chosen, the editor of the field in question should decide who is to take on the task. The same holds if there are conflicts, either because of a single work, or because a text has to be entirely revised. For the first issue, for example, I have already have drawn up the first elements of a survey of the state of present-day philosophy and believe I have put forward some novel ideas. But if I had the hope that subsequently you yourself might take over this survey, I would regard it as a fortunate thing and cast my thoughts in another form.

The other divergences can mainly be boiled down to the fact that in scientific matters you would prefer to have overviews, whereas we would like to have criticisms of individual works. The following reasons are why I am of the latter opinion, and I openly submit them to your judgment.

In many written works it is not simply the subject matter but also the person or the individual that is the most interesting; e.g. his style may be more or less eloquent, his manner of presentation, or his special intellectual

idiosyncrasies. Jacobi, for instance, is an individual of this kind. Perhaps there are not many at present, but in the future there could be more scientific works that will have to be considered from their artistic side. This also holds for works of art in the narrower sense. Thus, overviews will still remain the rule, and I even think there should be a special collaborator for every discipline who would be responsible for the general overviews. But single notices could still accompany the latter.

In the so-called empirical sciences many things are discovered along non-scientific routes. Allow me to here cite only physics and chemistry as examples. Either the point is found where the investigated fact is connected with the system, then any mention of it could naturally belong in the general overview, or it is not found (which could quite easily be the case), then the discovery should not remain undiscussed, but in the meantime be the object of a separate notice.²⁶

I do not know if I have succeeded in convincing you. I simply ask you now to let me quickly know with your customary openness whether or not I am flattering myself with a vain hope. And if this is the case, whether the reasons that led you to your decision are due to us. Please do not interpret this as a demand, but simply as the result of the sincere wish directly stemming from my reverence for you, to know exactly what parts of the plan you disagree with and what you think has to be changed in order to make it worth your participation.

It is impossible that you could have the obligation to Unger that we have with Cotta, even less since the plan that you *found prepared* was only from Woltmann, i.e., no doubt an utterly useless project primarily based on financial interests.²⁷ Cotta would be immensely honored if you were to place yourself at the head, and he would definitely agree to the same if not even better conditions than Unger [could give you]. Please only tell [August Wilhelm] Schlegel about these conditions, and he will immediately inform Cotta since he already has a contract with him. The announcement of the institute has to take place soon, and it could even happen before you are able to inform us about your adherence; this would only mean that for the time being no one in particular would be named as editor. I have questioned Schlegel on this point, however, and he prefers to wait for your final decision.

My first work will be on the current state of philosophy, and will appear in both the *Jahrbücher* and as a separate text. Of course, it is obvious that a general Critical Institute and a critical revision of an individual science as important as philosophy cannot both appear with the same publisher. And since Cotta had long cherished the idea of an institute of this kind, there was nothing else to do but join forces. Kindly take all of this into consideration. You are also assured of my most genuine admiration.

Yours truly,
Schelling.

6. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Bamberg, September 6–12, 1800

Berlin, 6th Sept. 1800.

Dear friend,

I wrote to W.[ilhelm] Schlegel outlining the reasons for my decision concerning the matter in question. I told him that I had already drawn up a highly similar plan to his and wanted to publish it.²⁸ It might be good to express the same plan in two different versions and locations to demonstrate our joint agreement.

Which passages in *Bardili* would you especially criticize? Apart from his chief mistake of tacitly and discretely transforming *thinking* into *being*, I want to above all show that the kind of thinking he sets up is not *real* thinking but merely an *abstraction*. Hence, to use Klopstock's words: he shoots a *pin* at the target instead of an arrow.²⁹ As for *Jacobi*, I want to demonstrate that he does not have any idea about the philosophy he is criticizing, not even a historical one; for example, he has not even read my *System of Ethics*,³⁰ not to mention the fact that he continues to accuse me of errors in the Kantian system of ethics and theology that I have actually corrected.

I still have not read the review of your *Transcendental Idealism* in the *L. Z.*³¹ However, I will read it before I finish the above overview. In any event, I am not opposed to the idea of putting the fight to Reinhold himself.

I hope Schlegel is still in Bamberg. If he is not there, just open the letter because it was also written for you and then pass it on to him.

Sincerely yours,
Fichte.

P.S. I have left the letter here since I have heard that Schlegel is probably no longer in Bamberg. I will get the letter to him some other way, and just add that despite my insistence Unger will not renounce his plan, and in these circumstances I feel that I ought to keep my word because I have already promised him the essays. However, I will consider myself to be free after the first issue, and then I could definitely do the occasional piece for your institute, but without feeling obliged to do anything specific.

To Professor *Schelling* in *Bamberg*

7. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Bamberg, September 13, 1800

Berlin, 13th September 1800

At the moment I am reading your letter from the 3rd, my highly esteemed friend.³² A couple of letters are waiting for you³³ and Schlegel³⁴ at the post office, they will be posted tomorrow. You will receive this one slightly earlier.

1). *I cannot break my word with Unger about the promised articles, just as little as I could ask you to break your word with Cotta. My secret wish and hope is that Unger and Woltmann (whom I am now leaving entirely to their own devices) will not find any collaborators, or they will find ones of the sort that I could immediately declare that I cannot work with them. Furthermore, I am not obliged to do anything for the first issue except the promised articles (which agrees quite well with the writers that you too would like to criticize, Bardili, Jacobi, etc.).*

2). Your sincerity calls forth my own.—With regard to you, Schleiermacher told utter lies.³⁵ I received your letter³⁶ in the morning; *and I did not learn anything new from it.* In the afternoon Schleierm.[acher] brought me Schlegel's letter, which I read in his presence.³⁷ I had the opportunity to notice a number of things, especially concerning the peculiar phrasing of this letter, and to give vent to my long-held annoyance to Schleiermacher in person.

a). I cannot know what I said to each and everyone of you. But I have not at all renounced the plan, and I most likely told *Friedrich Schlegel* and *Miss Veit* about the idea to secure here the wealthy Jewish traders Veit³⁸ and Levi as backers. Miss Veit has probably written to Veit, as she promised me, and Veit is supposed to come and see me, because not long ago Friedrich Schlegel again asked me if I had met Veit.—You well know that among us the plan that I tentatively drew up has not been criticized with regard to its *subject matter* but only if its execution was considered to be feasible, by me not any less than by our friends. It was an ideal to be measured against reality; and I did not have anything against this. I was simply waiting for the external opportunity; and believed I had been authorized to do so by these friends.

b). My plan had hardly been worked out when I unintentionally heard—even before I had written to any of you—that W.[ilhelm] Schlegel had likewise drawn up and passed around a plan, similar right down to its title, under the express *condition that I should not be told anything about it*, and for which Friedrich [Schlegel] and Tieck criticized him, saying that he had only done this in order to be in charge, and to also play a role, and so on.³⁹

I said that this was deceitful and altogether wrong, and I wrote to him and the others about this.⁴⁰

(Your matter, my friend, is something completely different, and I request that you do me the favor of not confusing me with W.[ilhelm] Schlegel. Your *separate* plan is not at all like my *general plan*.⁴¹ After I received your letter⁴² I could not be angry and was never angry with you.)

I have now received Schlegel's letter and his plan with its evasive intrigues.⁴³ His plan is identical to the one I drew up in Jena, right down to *certain expressions*, as well as *the title* (only "Yearbooks" instead of "Annals"; a confirmation that I later received from him as well), and it even contains a polemical passage against *my* plan. Then to keep this plan secret from me, and force the other partners to do the same; this plan, of which W.[ilhelm] S.[chlegel] has made

himself the editor, naively saying that the allocated remuneration for the editor should be substantial: I would have bet this to be impossible until I received this letter.—How was I supposed to feel?

c). How was I supposed to feel about the idea that the Schlegels and their friends, and unfortunately you too, my dear friend, because of an inappropriate relationship (you ought to distance yourself from these things as the heavens are from the earth), are only considered to be a clique by the vast majority of the public, and that the association of their mere names has to be disadvantageous for the plan that we drew up in the best interests of science. The Schlegels deserve respect, especially the elder one due to his considerable knowledge and unrivalled language skills; but even you still have not had occasion to take back your opinion of him—the younger one has sufficient depth and inwardness, yet an obstinate incomprehensibility—I will pass over their collaborators in silence, with the exception of Tieck, whom I admire—and put at the head of German—of human literature!!

What could I have felt and expected from the blatant tendency of these men to create a sensation in order to make money and to have to make *money*: a situation into which I am sad to say they have fallen.

d). By nature man is inclined to find himself again in the other person; I realize that this is what I am now doing in this matter—this is not necessarily the case for you, since in your last letter⁴⁴ you were simply informing me of what W.[ilhelm] S.[chlegel] had in mind.

I am so immersed in my own ideas that I can only be forced by duty to read the works of others, especially bad books, and to write reviews—God is my witness. Anyway, I have to live just as others need to, so for the reasons given above reviews are the worst way for me to earn money. I greatly despise these considerations because of this, but I am in the same boat as the others. I therefore accepted Unger's invitation without any particular inclination, partly out of a love of science, partly with respect to the things we had already agreed upon in Jena.

Thus, being in charge, gaining prestige and having a special remuneration, are not determining factors for me. You yourself, my esteemed friend, will surely believe this if you reflect on it for a moment: and you will make the others understand this if you respect me.

After all this I have decided the following: *if the Unger plan does not materialize, or if his institute fails, then I will gladly accept the conditions you propose: but only if you are the editor of the section on the natural sciences.* Thus it does not depend on me but on the circumstances, and here we will have to wait and see.—By the way, I would advise against giving it a name, but this also does not depend on me. The matter gains a reputation by means of the work and not the name—moreover, the Schlegelian names are not helpful, they ought to realize this.

Censeo, please burn this letter straight after reading it and *do not tell anyone about it*. With pure love and respect,

F.

8. Schelling in Bamberg to Fichte in
Berlin, end of September 1800⁴⁵ [Lost]

9. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling, October 3, 1800

Berlin, 3rd October, 1800.

No, my dear friend, it will not be easy for anyone wishing to sow discord between us. From my side at least I will seek to thwart their plans. In this regard, all I ask for is prompt answers to the following questions that are on the enclosed sheet of paper.⁴⁶

1). What did I tell Fr.[iedrich] Schlegel in the previous winter about you and your plans?⁴⁷

I place so little value on my *words* that I rarely recall them myself; but I am so sure of my *character* that I am convinced that I would have never spoken against my convictions and sentiment. I have always had the warmest respect for your mind and talents and have harbored the loftiest expectations of you for the sciences; *and it is absolutely impossible that I said something so contestable with this frame of mind*. If Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel] claims to have heard something of the sort from me then he is certainly not telling the truth.

I have occasionally read your stated views *on transcendental idealism in general*, and I have found them to be correct, to the point and brilliant; I have testified to this on numerous occasions both orally and in writing; it is impossible that I ever said anything to the contrary. If Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel] claims something of the sort then he is not telling the truth.

I have not had the chance to study your thoroughly original writings on the *philosophy of nature*, so I am not in a position to offer an opinion, be it praise or criticism. However, because I am well aware of your talents I am *confident* in advance that they are good. This is what I think and I am sure that I would not have said anything else.—It almost costs me more effort to work my way into a foreign system than to construct my own. Hence, with regard to the philosophy of nature it has always been and still is my intention to somehow or other work through it myself. I will then be able to correctly understand and pass judgment on your work. It is possible that I said this to Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel]; and doubtless there is nothing offensive in this to you.

I recall occasionally speaking with Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel] about the synthetic course of my method. A number of times he remarked that none of the other exponents of tr.[anscendental] id.[ealism] had mastered this method. It is possible that the same was said of you: but I see nothing in this that could cause offense to you.⁴⁸

If finally, without even taking into consideration that I do not remember or believe that I ever said anything to Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel] about our arrangement during the period of my dismissal from the University of Jena, then I could have only done this with an respectful account of your conduct; and this clearly absolves me from the charge of indiscretion, because I assume that Fr.[iedrich] Sch.[legel] is just as much your trusted friend as he is mine.

Whatever I said, I could have only said it out of respect and friendship for you, because I have never ceased to harbor these feelings: it can only occur in a *context* that evokes these feelings; it can only occur in a situation that is initiated by the person with whom I am speaking—I am not talking about trying to find out what people think—I am not going to ask you what you think about someone, then go and repeat your views to someone else entirely out of context).⁴⁹

Thus—until you answer the above question clearly, it is you who is acting in an unjust manner towards me, because you have accused me without giving me the possibility of defending myself.

2). What do you find so objectionable about my conduct towards you in the past winter?

During my trip to Jena I was especially looking forward to your company. I was not afforded this pleasure at your place because you were never there, and I often looked for you in vain. I could not visit the place where you were customarily to be found, and I did not want to go looking for you, with good reason.⁵⁰ It was impossible to ask you to constantly come to my place because we were in the final stages of moving house. You were at most two or three times at my home, and it cost me a lot of effort to inform you about the plan, which has now had such a painful and ugly aftermath. All this greatly upset me. So please: how am *I* the guilty party here?

Heaven is my witness as to how I said goodbye to you with genuine emotion; how it pained me that you had already given me proof of your deepest friendship by accompanying me for a while along my path, and how what was discussed then has now to be taken back. It certainly did not occur to me when I was in my coach after giving you a final parting kiss that you were still deeply troubled by a number of things (or was this not the case? Did Fr.[iedrich] Schlegel only tell you later about these revelations concerning my '*falseness*': or did other things happen between the first and second halves of your last letter?) Things, as I said, which now compel me to answer a letter from you like the present one.

3). You know full well that I only told you my opinion of W.[ilhelm] Schlegel because of the *urgency of the situation* (it was precisely in connection with the plan); and it did not differ from your own opinion of him which you had already communicated to me in Dresden before your arrival in Jena.⁵¹ And have I ever said anything as harsh about the two Schlegels as what you said in your last letter?

“How would I have appeared to him if you had repeated (?) this to W.[ilhelm] S.[chlegel]”? It would certainly not have pleased him, just as little as it would have pleased him to hear your opinion. But he would never have considered me false (just as presumably he would not have considered you), because *up until that point* I had never shown him the slightest sign of respect, neither in his presence nor in the presence of others (and this is presumably not the case with you). Only later through a couple of his more recent articles in the *Athenaeum* and a few of his poems did I gain respect for his talent. I said this to him and others and I would still say this.⁵²

Nevertheless, what I am talking about is: “You accuse me of falseness, and set W.[ilhelm] Sch.[legel] (who by God has not been honest with me) against me. You hope that I will not take part in any kind of intrigue against you. In spite of all your best efforts you could not refrain from making these last declarations to me.”

These declarations as such may also please me, but what upsets me is that *you thought* this about me too; why did you not tell me about this earlier? You allowed these misunderstandings to continue for so long between us.

You have the honor of being the first person to accuse me of falsehood. Excessive frankness, uninhibited and childlike devotion—these are the failings that others have accused me of and which I, unfortunately, also far too frequently see in myself.

In the meantime I am calmly explaining all these accusations solely with the desire to restore the relationship between us as to how it ought to be.

4). As for the thing with Bardili? I do not understand you.⁵³

The *written* sketch of my overview of the most recent philosophical literature lies before me, I wrote it *long before sending the printed plan to you*⁵⁴; in any event, B.[ardili] is discussed in it in connection with the points that I raised in my last letter.⁵⁵ (What you say about his conversations is also clear from his book: and it is also noted in my analysis.)⁵⁶

You really do not believe me capable—and to what end I do not know, but God help me because this seems to be the case from what you say—of pretending to have conceived this plan only “later” (to use your word), i.e. after *you told me* about Bardili? Am I so well-known for my poverty of thought that I have to lift my ideas from someone else; or if I do not find anything new I try working on the same thoughts that someone else has already had?—That *your* review of philosophical literature is almost fully worked out is in any case

given as a reason by W.[ilhelm] Sch.[legel]. But I do not wish to say that *my* sketch is already finished. Should Fichte and Schelling therefore treat material of *this kind* only with the other in mind! What I would give to be able to speak just an hour with you in order to put an end to this disastrous situation in which we continually find ourselves saying to each other: “Why do you have such a low opinion of me?”

5). “I must have dropped my guard against my opponents in this matter” (*this* is what the S.[chlegel]s are for me now, who earlier wanted to keep it *secret* from me and genuinely thought that I would entirely renounce the plan), since is *Woltmann* involved in this matter?—Oh, perhaps even someone like *Hermann* is mixed up in this business, who really knew exactly the names of our *corrector* and *typesetter*?

Dear Schelling: I cannot share the disgust that these people have for anyone who is not of their opinion, a disgust that passes from *literature* into *life*. If *we* had wanted to do the same, would we not have had to make a clean start with the world? Why should we even bother with these Schlegels, since we have clearly said to each other that they do not share our views?

Now, what has happened to this W.[oltmann]? Until we can be rid of him, he looks like doing a bad job with his topic. We could have done a better job ourselves! I have already thought about putting him off participating. In the next issue I would have placed the historical truth before the high court of philosophy and it would have thoroughly upset his method.

One is only appreciated by these people if one flees their opponents like the pest, and then subsequently attacks them. I have a fair idea of the origin of all their displeasure. It is because in Jena I continued to visit Schütz’s house even after W.[ilhelm] Sch.[legel] had declared war on the A.L.Z.: that in the intervening time I also have not entered the fray. But please, what have *Mr. and Mrs. Schütz* got to do with the A.L.Z? This is what I think and I will never think otherwise.

You say that “the Sch.[legel]s could have been *forced*[”] etc. etc. Really? Do you know that for sure? After their frequent public pronouncements one would have to assume that they simply do not consider me up to the task. Accordingly, they do not have the *task* in mind, but *remuneration* and *fame*. No good can ever result from an undertaking like that.

I am not writing this letter to argue but to reconcile myself with you. I will therefore ignore a number of harsh and offensive expressions in your letter.

For example: I *betrayed our* plan to W.[oltmann]—I did not tell you about this—and I hope that my word still counts—that U.[nger] and W.[oltmann] already *had* a plan, that *they* and not *I* made the first contact, that they first invited me, that I first of all proposed not *our* but *my* plan instead of the Unger-

Woltmannian plan; and then you and the S[chlegel]s were invited to participate in this plan.—However, because I then communicated *my* thoughts to you in Jena⁵⁷ (I believe that they were my thoughts), and that no one else accepted them, and no one else except you even bothered to discuss them with me—because of this, I am now not allowed to tell anyone else in the world about similar ideas?

I *sold* your labor to U.[nger]? Oh! When did I turn into such an excellent businessman? I only *invited* you⁵⁸; it was up to you to accept it or not. I even left it up to each and everyone of you to negotiate your own conditions (I had already negotiated mine; they were much better than I could have received from Cotta, and it was certain that all of you could have obtained more than the Schegelian offer of 3 *Louis d'or*—though neither *we* nor the others have lost anything)—you did not accept it.⁵⁹ You were perfectly right to do so: I did not get upset. Now everything has ended up in this chaotic situation because of Schleiermacher's intrigues and our misunderstandings, as well as wanting to judge the matter according to the idea, which is not my own, of intellectual property.—And then W.[ilhelm] S.[chlegel] expressly instructed everyone in on the secret not to mention any of this to *me*: to say nothing of the drawing up of a plan that agrees with my own in word and title—I have every right to be upset about all this.

The current state of affairs:

a). I only feel that I owe U.[nger] for the articles that I expressly promised for the first issue—I have just written to him to tell him that I do not want anything to do with the direction or editorship.

b). Even the realization of this commitment still depends on U.[nger] and W.[oltmann] (not me) inviting two people to join.⁶⁰ They are now most unlikely to join. They have not answered for at least 4 weeks. Consequently, I do not feel bound to anything and the institute will then not come into being.

c.) However, this does not mean that I will be joining your institute. I have, as you might recall, an aversion to working with the S[chlegel]s and with your Schleiermacher. Their attitude can never be mine. How am I to understand the current situation?—I could and I hope to be able to work with you; but on the condition that you change the tone you had with me in your last letter.—In this case I have another separate plan about which I will correspond with you, on the above condition. I will see to it that the *Phil.[osophisches] Journal*, which bores me, ceases to appear. Otherwise, I will remain by myself, which most suits my *disposition*.

But the most important thing of all, my dear friend—and I call you a friend from the bottom of my heart in the hope that these misunderstandings

will be overcome—is my wish that we stop misunderstanding each other; and that I can love you again with my entire soul, just as I have done up to now, and that you regain the confidence in me I believe I deserve to have with you.

In this regard I impatiently await your reply.

With respect and devotion,

Yours,
F.

To Professor *Schelling*

10. Schelling to Fichte in Berlin, October 13, 1800 [fragment]

[. . .]⁶¹ If you have the opportunity of asking Tieck for me: whether at any time during the entire winter he was struck by anything in my behavior, and whether he found me to be less favorable to him than the previous summer? If he answers this question in the affirmative then assure him in my name that this change in me is merely to be ascribed to the slanders of Miss Veit and Friedrich Schlegel, with which they have attempted, in my and Caroline Schlegel's view, to denigrate *his character*.

It is up to me to once again gain the respect of Tieck, just as my entire respect and affection for him has again been restored, and to which I was attracted by the very first impression I had of him.—I also do not see why I should have paid the slightest attention to that denigrating manner of treating people, which was obviously aimed at splitting up two people who had become close [. . .]

11. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling, October [21 or 22] 1800

Berlin, the [. . .]⁶²

Your last letter, my dear and precious friend, upset me much more than the previous one.⁶³ In the previous one I discovered a dear friend who was tired, credulous, impatient, but still basically honest; namely, you. This matter could be resolved and now has been. In your current letter I find a number of people that I was determined to try and love and treat with more respect—namely, the Schlegels—revealed to be even greater liars and odious betrayers than before. I have to resolve to despise and hate. Namely,

ad. 1. It is absolutely untrue that I spoke ill of you. Hence, where on earth did the advisers and alarmists get this from? Could Fr.[iedrich] Schl.[egel] have brought it with him from Berlin at Michaelmas 1799? The last thing we were occupied with then was our declaration concerning Kant.⁶⁴ Neither you nor

Schlegel found my conduct towards you at that time to be unfriendly.—Or did this first happen after my arrival in Jena the previous winter?⁶⁵ I have hardly ever spoken with the Schlegels, except in your presence, and I have not spoken with them as much as I have with you. Thus, it does not make sense that I would have expressed my displeasure to them—if I really did feel displeasure—*because I considered them to be your sincere friends*.

I was totally oblivious to the fact *that Fr.[iedrich] Schlegel was your enemy*: the first I learned of this was in your last letter.^{66*} (* How W.[ilhelm] Sch.[legel] hit upon the idea that it was I who first told you about his brother's attitude toward you is incomprehensible to me; because until yesterday evening (when I received your letter) I firmly believed that he was your friend and admirer.—Does not even the last issue of the *Athenaeum* contain a sonnet from him⁶⁷ in your honor?). *He has never said anything against you to me*.—I will leave it to you to draw your own conclusions from this important fact.

With Fr.[iedrich] Schl.[egel] I have always spoken more about things than people. Since then I have tried hard to recall, and remember that *once* (it was on a walk, and I distinctly remember the place: on the bridge over the river Elbe in Jena)⁶⁷ we spoke about the synthetic method. From this topic we came to speak of you, and I said to him what I told you might be possible in my previous letter.⁶⁹

In hindsight it is obviously wiser to say to a friend: make an effort to better understand the other person, because he does not like you. As a result there necessarily arises a relationship of coolness or reservation. Were the Schl.[egels] afraid that we might use our communal life in Jena to draw even closer together? Was this so displeasing to them that they tried to ruin it in advance with their pretenses?

No, my friend, neither you nor anyone else for whom I have any living interest will learn through *a third party* that I have something against them. I will first of all tell that person myself. As long as I have not directly argued with them, then no one can truthfully say that I have thought badly of them, or even that I would not have defended them.

So, for example, this Fr.[iedrich] Schl.[egel]—I am certainly not happy with him: it would be too boring for a letter, but if I were to see him, I would certainly give him a piece of my mind. However, until then no one outside our circle will learn of the change in our relationship.* (*In any event when W.[ilhelm] Sch.[legel] comes here I will certainly question him about it.)

ad. 2. The *one time* you heard that I had visited you was through your brother.⁷⁰ Usually he too was not at home. However, *early on* I went to your house not just once but numerous times, at all times of the day; I searched all over the place for someone to tell you this and could not find anyone.—Even your servant girl was never at home.—*Niethammer* can verify this, since I once complained to him about this when asking if he had recently seen you. *Later on* I obviously gave up on these increasingly fruitless searches.

Thus—someone has also drawn your attention to this situation.

ad. 3.) You always assume things that do not exist. *a).* the question mark⁷¹ did not mean: *did* you do this, but only, *could you have* done this? *b).* the remark that I never show W.[ilhelm] Schl.[egel] respect was not to *accuse you* but to *defend myself* against the charge of deceitfulness—in this context you seem to accuse me of this and by extension actually accuse yourself. What you say about yourself in this regard is clear. *c).* if I had talked about you to the Schlegels in the same way as I had talked to you about them, then of course etc. etc. But this is not the case.

By the way, my dear friend, be fully and absolutely assured that your earlier mistrust has been completely replaced in me by your current confidence.

ad. 4. By citing my words you have completely cleared up the whole misunderstanding. Because in Jena I had been thinking about writing *a review*—that is, a *separate review*—of B.[ardili's] *Logik*—say, for the *Philosophisches Journal*: I told this to all the people with whom I normally discuss such matters, *Niethammer* for instance, and most likely you. However, when I wrote to you I had no idea when *my review* would appear, just that it was supposed to be published *before* my overview in Unger's journal, which I considered as something entirely separate. (It is now finished and has been sent to the *Erlanger L. Z.*)⁷²

I thought the *matter* to be *otherwise*, and in connection with your last letter I could not but be offended, and I made certain statements that I now happily retract.

In addition, I do not want at all to start by being in a situation where one person is not allowed to work on the same topic as someone else. We will end up with the same thing with regard to the *matter*—and one can arrive at this correct inference after proceeding from the same principles. And this is what has again happened up to now in relation to Bardili; but there is such a difference in the external character of our readings that neither of our two works will be superfluous.

As for the view whether I was right to sketch that plan for Unger, we are still approaching it from opposite directions; your view actually gives me too much authority, and for that reason ascribes ambitions to me that I do not have. I have sufficiently explained my reasoning about this matter in my last letter. *I did not want to force you to do anything but for you to decide for yourself whether to join or not.*—But a discussion of this would be too much for a letter. Let us put this to one side until we *see* each other.

In any case, W.[ilhelm] Schl.[egel] made it a condition *in Berlin* for the invited contributors to keep the plan secret from me. I found out about this from one of the invited contributors (but W.[ilhelm] Schl.[egel] is not to know this, because this would give away that person who naturally *did not have any right to tell me*), even before I informed him about *my* invitation. I did not consider that assertion to be possible and thought: let us wait and see what happens.

With you it is of course something entirely different. It appears that *you were only invited out of necessity*, i.e., after it was discovered that you already had a similar project with Cotta. The Schleiermachers and others like them seem to have known about the project much earlier than you.

Goethe and Schiller are indeed the two invited contributors that I recently had in mind. But they have not replied yet, and I really hope they do not: or that they reject the offer. They are in your neighborhood, and so I not only give you permission but ask you to tell them all the details regarding my participation and how keen I am about this plan: but in such a way that I remain covered.

Now is really the time to establish a vigorous scientific journal, because I hear that Jacobi, Reinhold and Bardili are going to publish an anti-critical journal. But I do not exactly see why at the start of 1801. What do we care about *this* new century? I hope we have started earlier than that. *I* personally do not have any time this winter for a project of this kind. Instead, I want to publish my *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*: I believe it will put an end to all the doubts and contradictions in readers who are not completely without hope.⁷³

I will tell you more about this soon.

I took the liberty of speaking freely with Cotta about the Schlegels. I also told him that we are of one mind and that he will soon hear from us.

So hopefully we can now be like we were before! Let the intervening disturbances be eradicated from our life!

Sincerely yours,
Fichte.

Are you going to spend the winter in Jena?

I will pass on your regards to Tieck. It is absolutely imperative to unmask these false men.

To Professor *Schelling* in *Jena*

12. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, October 31/Beginning of November 1800

Jena, October 31, 1800.

Judging from Cotta's last letter, it had the right effect on him.⁷⁴ Thus, I would greatly prefer that you do not delay with the scientific journal, but if you are serious about it, to allow me to make a start on it, at least by Easter. If your other business does not permit you to contribute something straightaway, then I could write the first issue alone, and you could write the second. I have enough interesting material at the moment for a first issue. If you agree, then I could make an immediate start with Cotta and properly organize everything. Please inform me of your decision as soon as possible.

If I spend the coming winter here it will be impossible for me to travel, and not least, to allow Fr.[iedrich] Schlegel to take over the neglected transcendental science.⁷⁵ It is impossible for me to watch him destroy all the ground work, and transmit to students the poetic and philosophical dilettantism from the Schlegel circle instead of genuine scientific spirit, of which a foundation still remains here.⁷⁶ Before I had returned [to Jena], and unbeknown to me, Friedrich Schlegel had already signed up a large subscription of students. However, after I had held only four hours of lectures he was already killed off, and is now indeed buried. He partly has himself to blame. Because he could not work out anything for himself and presented sheer absurdities. From the proposition that you alone among the moderns possess the synthetic method, he concluded that the synthetic method has been hardly attempted up to now, and that he (Friedrich Schlegel) would be the first to completely carry it out. But in the same context he declared that it is nonsense to want to have a system.

Have you received my [*System of*] *Transcendental Philosophy*? And my journal as well?⁷⁷ I gave orders that they be sent to you, but I have not heard anything from you about them.

Yours sincerely,
Schelling.

P.S. This letter came too late for the post and was not accepted.

Today I received a new letter from Cotta in which he in any case says that

he gives me his word for the Review. I had already written to him beforehand to express my hope that you would be soon joining up with us to jointly edit a journal. I therefore ask you to decide as soon as possible so that the work is not split up again. I am thinking of including in my Review everything to do with philosophy, especially natural science in all its branches, and even mathematics, history etc. You will have to negotiate your own contract with Cotta, since I have already fixed my conditions, and do what you promised for Unger's plan, and at least appease him with the promised article (it would be better of course if you did not have to do this), and you will subsequently have your hands free for another institute. I impatiently await your reply, so that I can get to work on the other matters.

Schelling.

13. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, November 15, 1800

Berlin, 15th Nov. 1800

I also thank you, my dear friend, for those last explanations⁷⁸ concerning that misunderstanding which has now been completely settled; from them it appears that the family in question is not wholly to blame—I have communicated the corresponding passages of your letter⁷⁹ to Tieck.⁸⁰ I am really pleased to see that your old relationship with him has been restored. For some time now he has wanted to give me a few lines for you. I have not received them yet. Naturally I have not told him about any of the mistrust surrounding W.[ilhelm] S.[chlegel], but only passed on the parts of your letter in question.

I accept your suggestion for the scientific periodical. Feel free to write the first issue alone. I have my hands full here this winter with my *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, with a report of it for the general public, and with three courses.⁸¹

We still have time to agree on its *name*, the *announcement*, and all other *external matters*. The sole condition, though, is that the issues do not appear at designated times but whenever they are finished.

So, tell Cotta of my participation in this way. Hopefully nothing will come of *Unger's* plans and my hands will be free from this side.—Eight days ago I sent Cotta an *Announcement* for my new *Wissenschaftslehre*, in which I told the public that *the past is the past* and that in future I will study the progress of Φ [philosophy] in my own periodical.⁸² This is why I also cannot say anything too serious and severe to our philosophers⁸³ until after the publication of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. In my last letter to Cotta⁸⁴ I also said

that I am willing to work with you but not the Schlegels, and that I stand as one with you.

As for Fr.[iedrich] S.[chlegel's] prowess at the lectern, I have already received word of it in another letter.⁸⁵—On account of his exaggerations this man undermines a lot of the respect for the good efforts. I think it could not hurt to occasionally make fun of his insistent pleas concerning the lofty things that are happening there, since he himself has not contributed to them in the slightest.—I have heard remarkable reports from Tieck of how, among other things, Friedrich Schlegel behaves with his *knowledge of the arts*; how he overhears other people's judgments of books, books that he has never even read, and immediately exaggerates and transforms them.

I still have not received your journal⁸⁶, but I did get your *System of Transcendental Philosophy*: and I have closely studied the latter.⁸⁷ Compliments are not appropriate between us: I will only say that it is everything that I expected of your brilliant presentation.

However, I still do not agree with *your opposition between transcendental philosophy and philosophy of nature*. Everything seems to be based on a confusion between *ideal and real* activity, which we have both occasionally made; and which I hope to completely clarify in my new presentation. In my opinion, *the thing* is not added to *consciousness*, nor *consciousness to the thing*, but both are immediately united in the I, the *ideal-real, real-ideal*.—The *reality of nature* is different again. The latter appears in transcendental philosophy as something thoroughly *found*. Indeed, as something *finished* and *perfected*; and the former, to be sure, (is namely found) not according to its *own* laws, but according to the *immanent laws of the intelligence* (as ideal-real). Science only makes nature into its object through a subtle abstraction and obviously has to posit nature as something *absolute* (precisely because it abstracts from the intelligence), and lets *nature construct itself* by means of a *fiction*; just as transcendental philosophy lets consciousness construct itself by means of an *equivalent fiction*.

As I write this letter I do not have *your deduction of the three dimensions of space* at hand and I do not have time to look it up. For my part, I believe the following: 1). *Original* space, or space as *intuition*, does not have any dimensions. It is uniformly a *sphere*, whether small or large; and the work of the imagination is to merely *enlarge* or *contract* this sphere. This is why the deduction of the 3 dimensions is not at all incumbent upon the pure *Wissenschaftslehre* but initially upon the *philosophy of mathematics*; and the *philosophy of nature* presupposes this deduction from the latter. 2.) The three dimensions arise by means of *abstractive thought* in space: and are nothing more than the *universal forms of thinking* itself. First and foremost, the *point*; abstraction of the infinitely

many points enclosed in the sphere (from which later *angularity* arises, since everything is *round* in the intuition) and the form of *positing* in general. Then the *line*: the abstraction made in the point continues; otherwise, with every point of the line an infinite number of points would be *rendered concrete*; form: Kant's *subsuming power of judgment*. Plane (I do not recall any more the above abstraction) form: Kant's *reflexive power of judgment*. *Solid*: Kant's *reason*, which posits totality: and most of all approaches the intuition. The solid is then now really a space, just as the intuition would like to be. It only betrays the work of cognition and abstraction through the angularity.

All the very best.

Yours,
Fichte.

P.S. I have just received a letter⁸⁸ from which I can conclude:

1). that I am now completely free of *Unger*, because Schiller and Goethe have not agreed.

2). (Let us keep this completely *between you and me* so that no Schlegel or any other uninitiated person gets wind of it!) We, i.e., *you and I*, but no one else, will in all likelihood have Goethe and Schiller joining us to carry out a large project. Just leave the execution up to me.

A collaboration of this kind ought to have far-reaching consequences.

Please find enclosed my latest volume.⁸⁹

F.

14. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, November 19, 1800

Jena, the 19th of November, 1800

I thank you, most esteemed friend, for your agreement to a common critical effort. It is obvious that all the details of the undertaking can be entirely left aside for the moment; what seems important to me is that something or other appears soon. It is enough for me to know that you wish to take part and that the plan with Unger no longer binds you. In passing I note that the Schlegelian Institute is postponed, at least with Cotta, i.e., that it is abandoned, and it is right that such people as him [Friedrich Schlegel] whose mindless repetition and exaggeration of others' judgments I have long detested will at least have no voice in the matter. His brother [August Wilhelm Schlegel], who has sound judgment, and Tieck will know how to handle the matter. What most concerns me, before we can unite in a common endeavor to bring something to light, is our agreement on some points that you partially touched upon in your letter⁹⁰ and which are of the highest importance for idealism, at least as I understand and have always understood it. But I am not now in a position to write something to you that even somewhat satisfies me, since I have been

sick in bed for some days. The opposition between transcendental philosophy and philosophy of nature is the chief point. I can only assure you: the reason I make this opposition lies not in the distinction between ideal and real activity; it is something higher. In the 'Introduction,' where I first seek to rise from the standpoint of common sense to that of philosophy, I speak of object being introduced to consciousness and of consciousness being introduced to object. In this wording, the unity [of the two factors] seems an [external] addition. Surely you do not think that I conceive the matter this way *in the System* [of *Transcendental Idealism*] *itself*, and if you wish, unnecessarily, to examine the point in the whole web of the system where I permit the ideal and the real activity to simultaneously become objective, i.e., productive (in the theory of productive intuition), you will find that I posit both activities in one and the same I, just as you do—so the reason [for opposing transcendental philosophy and philosophy of nature] does not lie here. The reason is that precisely this ideal-real I, which is *merely* objective but for this very reason simultaneously productive, is in this its productivity nothing other than *Nature*, of which the I of intellectual intuition or of self-consciousness is only the higher potency. I simply cannot imagine that in transcendental philosophy reality is just something found, nor something found in conformity with immanent laws of intelligence; for in that case, though it may be found according to these immanent laws of intelligence of the philosopher, it would not be the laws of the object of philosophy, which is not that which finds reality, but is itself that which produces it; and truly for the philosopher himself, reality is not something simply found, but only for ordinary consciousness.

Let me briefly lay out for you the course of my thoughts which over the years have brought me to the point where I now stand. First, I simply detach myself from what concerns the *Wissenschaftslehre*; this stands on its own, there is nothing to alter in it, nor anything to add; it is complete, and must be so by its very nature. But the *Wissenschaftslehre* (in just the pure form as has been advanced by you) is not yet philosophy itself; what is valuable about the former is exactly what you say, if I understand you correctly, that it proceeds entirely in pure logic and has nothing to do with reality. It is, as far as I understand it, the formal proof of idealism, and hence science κατ' ἐξοχήν.⁹¹ What I want to call philosophy, however, is the *material* proof of idealism. In this latter discipline, the task is to deduce nature with all its determinations, indeed in its objectivity, its independence not from the I, which is itself objective, but from the I that is subjective and does the philosophizing. This occurs in the theoretical part of philosophy. It arises through an abstraction from the general *Wissenschaftslehre*. Specifically it is abstracted from the subjective (*intuiting*) activity that posits the subject-object as identical with *itself* in consciousness, and through that identical positing, it first becomes = I (The *Wissenschaftslehre* fails to suspend this subjective identity and is for that very reason ideal-realistic.) What remains after

this abstraction is the concept of the *pure* (solely objective) subject-object: this is the principle of the theoretical or, as I believe I can accurately say, realistic part of philosophy. The *I* that is the subject-object of consciousness or, as I also put it, the potentiated⁹² subject-object, is only the higher power⁹³ of the former. It is the principle of the idealistic (up to now called *practical*) part of philosophy, which first attains its foundation in the former. The cancellation of the antithesis that was established by this first abstraction should yield an *ideal-realism* that is not merely philosophical, but actually objective (art); this cancellation occurs in the philosophy of art, the third part of a system of philosophy.

But I do not know:

1) If you were to argue against me that *Wissenschaftslehre* is = philosophy and philosophy = *Wissenschaftslehre*, for if the two concepts are coextensive, we would be disputing about words. If you call philosophy *Wissenschaftslehre*⁹⁴ and permit me to call what I had previously called theoretical philosophy ‘physics’ (in the sense of the Greeks), and what I had termed practical philosophy ‘ethics’ (again in the sense of the Greeks), I would be satisfied. What I call philosophy of nature is then precisely what I have claimed, a science entirely different from the *Wissenschaftslehre*. The *Wissenschaftslehre* cannot be opposed or contrasted to philosophy of nature, nor to idealism, nor, if the presentation of the latter be called transcendental philosophy, to transcendental philosophy (as I have done in the ‘Introduction’ mentioned above). Now, however, as you can see, I no longer consider the natural and transcendental philosophies as opposed sciences, but merely as distinguished parts of one and same whole, namely, the system of philosophy, the parts of which are contrasted exactly the same way that theoretical and practical philosophy were previously contrasted.

But if you were to

2) then say that the philosophy which I call *purely* theoretical is precisely the science that you speak of in your letter, namely, one which would make nature *alone* its object through *free* abstraction, and then permit it to construct itself through a (justifiable) fiction, this is entirely and absolutely my view, if you do not perchance mean by this abstraction such a one that would leave behind something *merely* real, for simply nothing can originate from such a residue. After this abstraction, there remains an *ideal-real* item, but *as* such something purely objective, not grasped in its own proper intuition. In a word, what is left is the same [item] that appears *in a higher power* as I; except you can easily see that it is not a matter of indifference for the result whether the philosopher takes up his object in the higher power (as I) or in the root.⁹⁵ In the *Wissenschaftslehre*,⁹⁶ because it is theory of *knowing* (since ‘knowing’ already signifies in itself precisely the highest power), the philosopher must from the start take up his object *as I* (i.e., as primordially already *knowing*, hence not merely objective). This is not the case in the philosophy of nature which (as the theoretical part of the system) arises through *abstraction* from the theoretical-

practical *Wissenschaftslehre*. Hence transcendental idealism is a valid stance only for one who *from the beginning* intends to set out from *knowing in the highest power* insofar as it is at once theoretical and practical; it is also valid for one who proceeds solely from the practical standpoint, but not for one who starts out from the *purely theoretical*. Hence too, transcendental philosophy cannot be based on theoretical philosophy, rather it proceeds from its results; on this view, I refer, for brevity's sake, to the final paragraphs of my treatise on the dynamical process in the attached second issue of my *Zeitschrift*.⁹⁷

At this point I do not know whether we can agree, whether in your view I must finally return to transcendental idealism precisely because I raise myself *along with* my object to the highest power where I entirely coincide with it and am one with it, or whether (I say) all of this seems to you to be an unnecessary amplification [of our differences]. Perhaps it is. But I have believed and still do believe that on this very path all misunderstandings about idealism can forever be resolved, with utmost certainty. However things turn out, please believe that if I seem to distance myself from you it is only so that I can entirely coincide with you, and allow that if I proceed in a tangent from the circle in which you must enclose yourself with the *Wissenschaftslehre*, I will sooner or later return to your center, enriched, as I certainly hope, with many treasures and thereby give your system an extension that, in my opinion, it could not otherwise attain.

This difference, which I know and announce beforehand will be resolved in a most perfect harmony, cannot therefore keep us from bringing something collaborative before the public. It will all the more animate [philosophical] activity if one sees us moving toward a common goal in seemingly different directions, while one is as yet unable to see how this might be possible; every kind of printed text poses at the same time a powerful obstacle, but you are so far above wanting to have a mere disciple of any sort not to gladly embrace this peculiar path that I wish to take, and not bid me to follow it if you are convinced it will lead to the goal. I do not need you to say that I have been in agreement with you on all essential points of your system and that, for that very reason, I think I thoroughly understand it. Where I am not in agreement with you and the point is an important one (e.g., the doctrine of religion) I believe I do not yet understand you. This is just one point, but since up to the present we have been fully in agreement on fundamental principles, in respect to this agreement on fundamentals, it is *not* an essential one.

I am at least partially in agreement with what you have written on the deduction of the three dimensions. Pure space has no dimensions, but for that very reason, it is also not a sphere, since though the sphere indeed lacks length and breadth, it does have depth. Space as a sphere is thus already in reflection a limited intuition of infinite space. In my opinion, philosophy of mathematics is an abstraction from philosophy of nature, just like the philosophical discipline of purely formal thinking, i.e., logic, is an abstraction from the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

The line, as an increasing and decreasing magnitude in one dimension, is the schema of arithmetic, whose series [of numbers] also has this one dimension, the plane is the schema of geometry, etc. Yet line, surface, and body *originally* are produced only in philosophy of nature and first enter philosophy of mathematics through abstraction. Philosophy of nature, therefore, cannot presuppose them apart from this abstraction.

I admire the thoughtfulness of the remaining matters you tried to communicate to me. There must surely be a point where I can come to agreement with you on them. But, for a start, I am so far certain and, if your many activities are not too demanding, may I ask you to read the article *on the dynamic* process in the attached issues,⁹⁸ I am certain enough to prove to you that the three dimensions correspond to three acts in nature (the act of magnetism, electricity, and the chemical process) and that these three acts again correspond to the act of self-consciousness, feeling,⁹⁹ and productive intuition in the I. But from the standpoint of *reflection*, it might be equally true to say that the three dimensions arise in us *again* through subsuming judgment, reflective judgment, and reason, after being posited in those first acts without consciousness.

I cannot tell you enough how pleased I am to see you again engaged in the sphere of activity that in earlier times you so masterfully filled. I might even say that it is an epoch in the external history of philosophy that Fichte lectures on his philosophy in Berlin. My sincerest thanks for the writing you sent¹⁰⁰ which I shall study with the greatest eagerness as well as *The Vocation of Man*, which I have just received today from you, sent by way of Friedrich Schlegel. That you have not received my *Zeitschrift [für spekulative Physik]* is solely the fault of the dilatory Gabler,¹⁰¹ whom I could not closely supervise in my absence.

You have given us a fine piece to read these days with your review of Bardili¹⁰² in the *Erlanger Zeitung*. This review is really lethal, and so appropriate that it could not possibly be improved. It is here (perhaps through Mehmel¹⁰³ who has rendered the service of making it widely known that you are its author). Goethe, who is here right now, has begged me to show it to him.

I wish you the greatest success regarding your collaboration with Goethe and Schiller on some common venture. It seems quite conceivable to me and quite gratifying too. When you have the opportunity, convey my greetings to Tieck and tell him I will be happy to soon send him something that I have long set aside for him.

Be well my dearest friend, and stay well-disposed towards me.

Truly yours,
Schelling.

P.S. I read over this letter once more and discovered with what carelessness it was written. Please put this down to the state of my health. I could say

with Jacobi¹⁰⁴ that Fichte understands me with half the words! The first issue of Reinhold's journal¹⁰⁵ is already printed.

15a. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena [Draft of a Letter]

Berlin, 8th October [actually circa Dec. 27th] 1800¹⁰⁶

I wrote to you, my dear friend, about some differences in our views, not because I considered them to be obstacles for a joint project; (indeed, even you yourself would not consider them to be such), but simply to give you proof of my attentive reading of *your* writings. Now to anyone other than you, whose genuine divinatory talent I know, I would tell them that they are obviously wrong.

The matter is as follows: in accordance with everything that has been clearly presented up to now, the subjective—in its subjective-objective nature—cannot be anything else than the *analogue of our self-determination* (nature as *noumenon*) that *we*, through thinking, have *imported* into what is the creation (that is incontestably ours) of our imagination. *Conversely*, the I in turn cannot be explained from something that in another place had been completely explained *by it*.

But I cannot believe that you are capable of such an offense; I too have known for a long time the real reason behind this and the other differences between us. It is precisely the reason for other people's displeasure with transcendental idealism, and also why *Schlegel and Schl.[eiermacher]* go on about their *confused* Spinozism, and why *Reinhold*, who is even more confused, goes on about his Bardilianism. It is because I still have not been able to establish my system of the *intelligible world*.

To be more precise—the *Wissenschaftslehre* (as you understand it; for me, the *Wissenschaftslehre* = philosophy in general)—or transcendental idealism as the system that moves within the circumscribed territory of the subject-objectivity of the I, as finite intelligence, and its original limitation through *material feeling* and *conscience*, is able to completely deduce the sense world within this circumscribed area, but absolutely does not embark on any explanation of the original limitation itself.—There still remains the question, after having first established the right to go *beyond the I*, whether we might be able to also explain these original limitations; [to explain] conscience from the intelligible as noumenon (or God), and [to explain] feelings, which are only the lower pole of the first, from the manifestation of the intelligible in the sensible. This yields two new completely opposed parts of philosophy, which are united in transcendental idealism as their midpoint. Finite intelligence as spirit is the *lower* potency of the intelligible as noumenon; and as *natural being*, the same is the highest potency of the intelligible as nature. Now if you have taken the

subjective in nature for the intelligible, which consequently cannot at all be derived from the finite intelligence, then you are entirely right.

I will get to work on a presentation of these thoughts in the coming summer. The clearest hints about them—and they are nothing more than hints—are to be found in the 3rd book of *The Vocation of Man*.¹⁰⁷

15. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, December 27, 1800

Berlin, Dec. 27th, 1800.

I thank you my dear friend for the two issues of your journal for natural philosophy which I will attentively peruse.¹⁰⁸

I had written to you about a couple of differences in our view, not because I considered them to be an obstacle for collaborating on our joint project, but simply as proof of my attentive reading of your writings.

I believe that I understand you quite well, and indeed that I had already done so beforehand. I just think that these principles do not follow from the previous principles of transcendentalism,¹⁰⁹ but rather that they are opposed to them. That they can only be grounded in an even *further expansion*¹¹⁰ of transcendental philosophy, *even in its principles*, to which in any event we are urgently compelled by the demands of the time.—I still have not been able to formulate these expanded principles in a scientific manner; the clearest hints about them are to be found in the third book of my *Vocation of Man*. An exposition of them will be my first task after the completion of my new presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. In a word: *a transcendental system of the intelligible world* is still lacking; I can only find your assertion to be correct—that the *individual*¹¹¹ is simply a higher potency of nature—under the condition that I do not posit nature as a mere phenomenon (and to this extent as obviously produced by finite intelligence, hence, not producing it in turn),¹¹² but by finding an intelligible element in it of which the individual as such is the lower potency (the *merely determinable* element) of something that is the higher potency (the determinate).¹¹³ We can only understand each other and resolve our differences within such a system of the intelligible.

Just consider what Reinhold is up to. I have had him sent (through the editor of the *Erlanger Zeitung*) my review of Bardili and requested him to study transcendental idealism slightly better than he has done so far. He takes it deadly seriously and now wants to show “*that B.[ardi]lian philosophy does not proceed from consciousness, or any fact whatsoever, since it does not admit or require any empirical presupposition at all*”!!¹¹⁴ How will he do that?—After my

review he immediately wrote me an open letter¹¹⁵ that is to be printed in his new philosophical journal. If this journal is to be printed in Jena, as I presume, would you be so kind as to immediately send me a copy of it.

No, I am not giving public lectures. The scholars here engage in malicious intrigues, and the people who go to them with a thirst for learning, end up confused; I have not done anything about [giving lectures], and so it has remained like this. I only have two private students.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, I will not leave Berlin without also testing the minds of the people by means of lectures.

Take care, and keep my affection in mind.

Fichte.

To Professor Schelling in Jena.

16. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, April 29, 1801

Berlin, April 29th, 1801.

Schlegel¹¹⁷ passed on your greetings to me, my dear friend.

You might be interested in the enclosed brochure¹¹⁸ which is just off the press. Please give a copy to *Goethe* (and assure him of my tender concern in his illness and recovery) and also give one to *Schiller*. Likewise pass one on to Fr.[iedrich] Schlegel, who is now overseeing the printing of my *Nicolai*¹¹⁹; as well as *Niethammer*, with the news that I still have not received any letters from Bialystock and from Warsaw, but tell him that I will write more to him soon. I had hoped to have heard something from you about the journal that we had discussed the previous winter. For *my part*, I have to publish something or other in order to counter the numerous baseless rumors.

With the convictions that are amply known to you

Sincerely yours

Fichte.

Another text from me will appear at the book fair.¹²⁰ I do not have a copy at hand. I will, however, request that one be sent to you.

17. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, May 15, 1801

Jena, the 15th of March [May] 1801.¹²¹

Your last letter gave me the deepest satisfaction, my worthy friend. Many tasks and my sickly condition, which barely left time for the most necessary

matters, kept me from answering you earlier. Now I can do better through the enclosed works¹²² than was possible by a letter. I ask you to please accept them with my good wishes and hope that you can find them in agreement with your thoughts. I confess I have not yet been able to pursue the *Presentation [of My System of Philosophy]* to the point where the relation of this system to what has hitherto been thought of as idealism must become clear. For you, there is no need to do this. Your last remark: “You understand me well and have always so understood me, only in light of what I would not comprehend or derive from previously held principles of ‘transcendentalism,’ but from something perhaps rather opposed to them, from an enlargement of idealism in its very principles”¹²³ makes me hope that at least you will be in general agreement with my undertaking (which concerns this ‘enlargement’), although I indeed do not know whether the kind of enlargement I provide is of the same sort or is harmonious with that which you have intended for idealism. Your *Announcement*¹²⁴ of a new presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre* necessarily interested me very much and you can easily judge with what eagerness I look forward to it, and to the *Crystal Clear Report* as well.¹²⁵ In any case, I am indebted to you for posting this announcement to me in which you do me the honor of discussing my works, and I must in any case and without further analysis acknowledge, since it is well-known to you, that in the particular case of my works in the philosophy of nature, it never was my intention to get access to the public through the transcendental viewpoint that is usually credited to you or through the viewpoint that, according to what is said above, is in contradiction to what I wish to say. My most ardent wish is that you will soon have the leisure to expound the *System of the Intelligible [World]*, since I suspect this will be quite helpful in completely and forever resolving all existing differences, and every presentation that stays within the hitherto prevailing circle of discussion brings me no closer to your genuine sense and meaning, since, as you can appreciate, I stand on a point whose discussion falls outside this circle on which, for this very reason, the whole meaning of your system depends. It might be asking too much of your friendship if I would request you presently to communicate some of your ideas on the appearance of the enclosed *Presentation [of My System]*.

I am always thinking how I could manage to come to Berlin next autumn for a shorter or longer time in order to see you again and speak with you. *Nicolai's Leben*, of which I have a copy through your good offices, is a wholly new acquisition for our literature, not only because of its contents, but equally or more importantly because of its form. Hopefully this work is fatal not only for the individual mentioned but for the whole race to which he belongs.

Be well, my dearest and esteemed friend, and remain well disposed to me.

Schelling.

18. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, May 24, 1801

May 24th 1801.

My worthy friend, a few hours ago I received your reply to Reinhold and have since read it several times. It has touched me and in some places shocked me; it is the sign I have long awaited from you and the most important gift you could give me. I am freed from all doubt now and see myself anew in harmony with what I think is more important for me to agree with than the concurrence of the whole rest of the world is or could be. Henceforth I will no longer be embarrassed to say that what I have in mind is just the same as Fichte thinks, and one can consider my presentations as mere variations on his themes. I will no longer be held back by this hesitation from putting forth as our common assertion something that was perhaps only mine and which could stand in the way of your thoughts in the eyes of the public; for I see this from your writing, and you will have perceived from the presentation of my system¹²⁶ which appeared in the meantime, that we both acknowledge only one and the same absolute cognition¹²⁷ which is identical¹²⁸ and ever-recurring in all acts of cognition,¹²⁹ and which both of us endeavor to present and make evident in all domains of knowledge; outside this one cognition there can be no comparable certainty that is not the same in its nature as this cognition; for precisely in the uniqueness of the mode of this cognition lies the ground for the uniqueness of the certainty that it carries with it. It is the sort of cognition which, once achieved, can longer err. We may differ in the way we express this and try to present it in a wholly distinct manner, but we can no longer disagree about the matter itself, and if we ever were at odds, I will gladly and willingly take responsibility for that. When this cognition is formally established and secured as the sole theme and principle of [all] philosophical efforts,¹³⁰ then divine philosophy will once again be given its full freedom and, like the object that it portrays, it will evermore repeat only the one absolute and bring it to light in infinite forms and shapes. Whatever it touches will directly become holy through this contact and this cognition will transform everything into the divine itself. And so henceforth there will be but one object, one mind,¹³¹ one act of cognition,¹³² one knowledge¹³³ of this object, and from the first realm of its revelation a second will arise through philosophy and art, every bit as rich and diverse as the first, and yet simply the display¹³⁴ of this One in thoughts and works.

I ask you, my dearest friend, to furnish me some reactions¹³⁵ on the manner and form of my presentation, for indeed the effort is necessary to approximate as far as possible the original form in which the absolute should be portrayed, even though it never manifests in any form the way it actually is. In the following issue I will explain with complete evidence, as I believe I can, how from this presentation, *consciousness* or the *I* develops as something

like the noonday of existing absolute identity; and since the I alone is actually existing identity, while all of nature is merely this same absolute identity insofar as it is the ground of this its proper existence, so too idealism unfolds from this point as the true, all-encompassing, all-comprehending, and penetrating sun; it will be clear that everything lives and moves in this sun and in what exalted sense everything = I and only = I.

You will have found that I treat Reinhold somewhat more disdainfully. I have certainly not made the distinction you made and at least for the present cannot accept that he has acted as no more than a mere student of Bardili, but as a zealot and actual advocate. When you have a chance, read the essay printed in the *Teutscher Merkur*. The title is: “der Geist der Philosophie der Geist der Zeit”¹³⁶ In the meantime, I would struggle in vain to put in words my amazement at the manner and the art with which you have handled him. Posterity will view this essay, perhaps alongside the “Annihilation-acts,”¹³⁷ as the peak of the polemic art of the whole age. Personal and I might almost say physical antipathy have made me wholly incapable of doing anything better in this affair. I know Bardili; I used to think that all his ‘knowledge’ was a penny-compilation from Plato, whom he pretends to read, some Leibnizean propositions, Tübingen-Ploucquetish¹³⁸ philosophy (here is the major source) and finally some propositions from your system, which in any case he perhaps just picked up, although it later came to my attention that he had really read and re-read your writings and mine; I also know that this man who wanted to do nothing more than vent long pent-up resentment cannot merit the least bit of attention. The insolence of Bardili or Reinhold (I cannot exactly distinguish what belongs to whom, since I have never read the former and just cursorily read the latter)—which perhaps *is* not as unconscious as you seem to imagine, to steal the ideas from idealism itself in order to refute a distorted and badly understood version of idealism, in this effort to turn them about and with notable zeal explain them in a way that makes it easy to reject them—the insolence was really singular. Whether Reinhold himself might not actually be innocent in this affair, I do not wish to say. I know for sure that Bardili is not innocent and that he knows *what* he has borrowed from you and yours. The absurd babble about thinking as an objective activity has as what is true in it nothing other than precisely the chief assertion of idealism itself, that the uniquely existing [item]¹³⁹ is the *I*, and every thing that is existent¹⁴⁰ is subject (Reinhold’s thinking) and object.

If I have treated Reinhold too rudely, you have given him too much credit, as you yourself made known, just to be able to simply comprehend him. In fact a friend who is very well acquainted with this matter assured me that the Bardilian-Reinholdian A and the endlessly iteration of this A is simply nothing other than the *logically universal* concept and that *logical* universality and iterability is thus really very far from the absolute cognition that we speak

of, which according to us recurs in everything, and which is really for us the sole cognition; it is only a collective cognition, hence also one that has, quite unacknowledged, a multiplicity of cognitions in it.¹⁴¹

Dear friend, please excuse the haste of this writing in both style and substance. I wanted to convey my thanks and my positive feeling to you with the next post. It is already late and I can only set down in sparse words:

1) that I have delivered all your messages,

2) that I am pleased to see you return to the idea of the journal. All my wishes are with you in this. I promise to regularly contribute to it, with true seriousness. For now, I await your precise news and ask you to arrange everything else as you see fit. I believe something of it should be able to appear at the autumn book-fair.

Heartfelt greetings, my dearly beloved and worthy friend; I am, with this sentiment

Completely yours,
Schelling.

Postscript: I have heard Goethe, to whom Cotta already delivered the sole exemplar at the Easter Fair, speak of your essay¹⁴² with true love and admiration.

19. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, May 31–August 7[8?], 1801

31st May¹⁴³

Your letter of May 24, my dear and cherished friend, restored to me such a joy and hope for science, something I had more or less given up on for quite some time now. The first positive thing is that it has allowed me to speak entirely openly with you, without being afraid of prematurely bringing up things, which would be better for science if they did not occur.

Respect between men who work on the same science, and who know as I have known for the last 8 years that they have earned this right, can only consist in mutually showing the utmost confidence and tact with each other, and in always explaining things to the other person in the most constructive manner; and if the most constructive explanation is still insufficient, in hoping that whoever is wrong will be led by his talent back to the right path. This is how I have always conducted myself with you, and when you thought that I was wrong, this is how you acted with me. Let me now speak about my relationship to you.

Your earlier remark in the *Philosophisches Journal* concerning two philosophies—an idealistic and a realistic one—where both are true and can coexist alongside each other, was gently but quickly rejected by me because I considered it to be incorrect.¹⁴⁴ It naturally made me suspect that you had not penetrated into the *Wissenschaftslehre*; but you had expressed so many other

infinitely lucid, profound and correct things there that I had hoped: In due course you would make up for what was lacking.

Later you informed me about your conception of the philosophy of nature.¹⁴⁵ I perceived here again the same old error; but I continued to hope that by elaborating this science you would find the right path. I eventually understood your view concerning the possibility of deriving intelligence from nature.¹⁴⁶ I will say to you what I doubtlessly would say to *anyone else*—to remind you of the obvious circularity in deriving nature from intelligence and intelligence in turn from nature, and that I do not understand how a man such as you could have overlooked this. As you know, I explained this principle of yours the way I did, but without further explaining whether it is right to incorporate the intelligible into a philosophy of nature, because I thought here too a hint would suffice.

Finally I received your *System of Philosophy* and its accompanying letter.¹⁴⁷ In the Introduction you say some problematic things about *my* idealism: in the letter you speak of an *ordinary* view¹⁴⁸ of idealism; if you conceive the first categorically, and with regard to the second, think that my view of idealism might be this one, which is most surely the ordinary view, then it just proves that your misunderstanding of my system persists. I do not have your earlier letter¹⁴⁹ at hand, but if I correctly recall you assert in it that I concede that certain questions have not yet been settled by means of the principles existing up to now. I do not concede this at all. The *Wissenschaftslehre* does not lack any principles; but it certainly lacks completion. That is to say, the highest synthesis, the synthesis of the spirit world, still has to be carried out. As I made a move to carry out this synthesis the cry of atheism went up.

To the extent that I have read your system, we could certainly end up with the same view regarding the *substance*, but not at all regarding the *presentation*, and the latter here is an essential element of the substance. I believe, for example, that I am able to prove that your system on its own (without tacit explanations from the *Wissenschaftslehre*) does not possess any self-evidence, and could never obtain any at all. This is immediately obvious from your first proposition.

I hope to make this wholly clear to you with my new presentation [of the *Wissenschaftslehre*].

So much for the moment. Questions as to whether the *Wissenschaftslehre* considers knowledge to be subjective or objective, or whether it is idealism or realism, make no sense; for these distinctions can only be made *within* the *Wissenschaftslehre* and not outside it or prior to it; and thus they remain incomprehensible without the *Wissenschaftslehre*. There is no particular idealism, or realism, or philosophy of nature, and so on, which would be *true* here; but everywhere there is only one science and that science is the *Wissenschaftslehre*: and all the other sciences are only *parts* of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and are only true and self-evident to the extent that they rest on its foundation.

One cannot proceed from a *being*¹⁵⁰ (everything to which mere *thinking* refers, and what would follow from this, to which the *real-ground* applies, is *being*; granted, it might also be called reason); but one has to proceed from a *seeing*¹⁵¹; it is also necessary to establish the identity of the ideal-[ground] and real-ground, [which] = the identity of intuition and thought.

For instance, grasp in consciousness that there can only be one straight line between two points. First and foremost, here you precisely have your conceiving and penetrating of the act of self-evidence itself, and this [is] my *fundamental point*. You presuppose and assert absolutely that this proposition is valid *for* all possible lines, as well as *for* all possible intelligences; and you do it in the following manner: you posit in the first instance, i.e., the form of *grasping* itself, as something *determined* (material); in the second [instance], as something *determinable*. The first gives you in time as an *individual* itself; the second, where you precisely posit it merely as something *determinable*, positing the empty form of egoity, subsequently gives you the spirit world. Universal (finite) consciousness is therefore the absolute union of the consciousness of the spirit world and that of the individual. The latter is the ideal ground of the former; the former ([which] can never, however, be *cognized* and *penetrated* by self-evidence) is the *real ground* of the latter.

I said, you yourself posit, i.e., your conceiving, your coincidence of the subject-objectivity, as something *determined*. This takes place in absolute consciousness, which cannot be surpassed or reflected again in any consciousness. This determinacy is therefore an *absolute determinacy* that cannot be reflected or penetrated by any consciousness, which is = the formerly given actuality or reality, to *being*. Being is—a *seeing that is impenetrable to itself*. If however you posit this determinacy (you will see it below under a different point of view) as a quantum of the opposing determinability, then the real ground lies outside all consciousness because precisely this quantum cannot be more or less separated. It is = X of self-evidence, the eternally impenetrable.

If you posit absolute consciousness = A, then in it the form of the consciousness as something *determinable* is = B +^a C. Determinacy of consciousness, and an *ideal transition* from C to B is reproduced in it, and a *real transition*, but only its form from B to C can be described.—In *a*. there is the transitional and turning point that runs in opposite directions. (Here lies the ground of the synthesis.)

Let us now leave consciousness A and proceed to C. For this is also a *consciousness*; and it attains consciousness through *the form of self-evidence*, but in such a way that the *determinacy* remains. An immediate consciousness of this kind therefore (I am only briefly sketching the results here) is a consciousness of acting, since it once again presupposes a concept of purpose as its determinant,

and the latter presupposes a *thing*-concept as its determinable: and for the first time here, in this small region of consciousness, there is a sense world: a nature.

Self-evidence¹⁵² is valid *of* everything (in consciousness C) and *for* everything (in consciousness B). How does this come about? Where is the point of union and turning point of this double validity? Answer: C is an *In* with regard to B and a *For* with regard to itself.

Nothing is valid *of* everything which is therefore also not valid *for* everything, and vice-versa: then the *Of* itself is only that—only taken as a *determined For*: and the *For* itself is only that, only taken as a determinable *Of*.

The *Of* proceeds from the *For* in a real sense¹⁵³ (and therefore too the world of the *Of*, the sense world, from the world of the *For*, the spirit world) precisely because in absolute consciousness the former is the *determined* of the latter, as something determinable.

Certainly, however, in an ideal sense¹⁵⁴ the *For* proceeds from the *From*; the universal is cognized through the cognition of the particular, the spirit world by the cognition of the sense world.

We do not have any *determined* (individual) consciousness at all without having *determinable* (universal of finite reason) consciousness, and vice-versa.

This law is precisely the fundamental law of finitude, and this *alternating* point is its standpoint.

No one thinks it himself, or imagines he thinks it himself, though it is certain he thinks.

Consequently, the entire consciousness C itself is nothing but an *object* of consciousness A. However, it has absolute validity *for everything* to the extent it is contained in the original form of consciousness A. If this entire enclosed consciousness C is again taken up into A, it yields a system of the spirit world (the above B) and an inconceivable real ground of the separation of the single entities, and the ideal link of everything = God. This is what I call the intelligible world. This latter synthesis is the highest. If you wish to give the name *being*, indeed absolute being, to whatever still remains impenetrable to this view, then God is pure being. Notwithstanding, in itself this being is not some kind of compression, but it is absolute agility, pure transparency, light, but not the light of reflected bodies. It is only the latter for finite reason: it is therefore only a *being* for the latter and not in itself.

The synthesis of consciousness A and C ($A + C \neq A + C$ in X = absolute comprehension, and therefore the principle of finite reason is in every single act of comprehending the inconceivable.¹⁵⁵

The *Wissenschaftslehre* presents the system by means of this principle; hence, it presents the *absolutely universal consciousness of the entire spirit world as such*, and it is this consciousness itself. Every individual is a *particular view* of this system

from its own fundamental point of view. However, for the *Wissenschaftslehre*, which is itself a science, a penetrating of the universal consciousness, this point is the impenetrable =X. Hence, far from trying to proceed from the individual as such, the *Wissenschaftslehre* cannot arrive at this point at all. For *life*, though, this X is *factually* (not genetically) penetrable.

Every individual is a rational square of an irrational root lying in the entire spirit world; and the entire spirit world in turn is a rational square of—what is *for itself*, and its universal consciousness, which everyone has and can have—an irrational square = the immanent light or God.

* The sense world, or nature, however, is none other than the appearance, precisely of this immanent light. (A philosophy of nature may of course proceed from an already finished and static concept of nature: but in a system of complete cognition, this concept itself and its philosophy must be first derived from the absolute X that is determined by the laws of finite reason. An idealism, however, which tolerates a realism beside it, would be nothing at all: or if it still wanted to be something, it would have to be universal formal logic.)

* I'm reading the *ErlangerL.[iteratur] Z.[eitung]* no. 67 at the moment. Page 531 contains my entire thought: only I do not wish to express myself with *doubt* but *categorically*.¹⁵⁶ The reasoning on pp. 533f. is also splendid.¹⁵⁷

The latter point in particular should show how my philosophy is related to yours, as well as to the suppositions, wishes, and misunderstandings of our contemporaries. To the extent that one detected a kind of trace of individuality in my 'I,' then one would clearly have to be prudent about a derivation of this individual. From the above you can see that I also derive it—in this respect we are in agreement; but for heaven's sake, not from a nature or a conceivable universe, or something or other to which the real-ground is applicable.

Regarding the further expositions of your system, I will leave it up to you if you wish to wait or not for the appearance of my new presentation. I will readily admit to you that I am fairly sure of my position, partly because of the inner nature of the self-evidence; partly because of the external fact that for a whole year now I have done nothing but elaborate these investigations from countless sides and avenues, and time and time again and against my will and knowledge, I have arrived at the same result that I discovered eight years ago in my old presentation¹⁵⁸ and which I had completely forgotten about: and even more, the remarkable organization of the whole. But of course, I do not want to pre-empt your examination.

It will certainly damage all the good work if the differences between us continue to grow, and become exploited by the enemies of science and the ignorant in the worst possible way.

I am delighted that you enjoyed my writings against Nicolai and Reinhold. *You* will hardly find anything new in the *Crystal Clear Report* that accompanies this letter.¹⁵⁹ If I am not entirely satisfied with your rebuttal of Reinhold it is not because of *Reinhold* but more because of *you yourself*. A purely *objective* polemic allows the polemicist himself to stand out more and cuts deeper. Yet I am also pleased in this respect.

When I wrote my text I had not yet read Reinhold's essay in the *Merkur*.¹⁶⁰ And as you can see, I even expressed the hope that he would not continue this careful work. I have now read his essay and find it—much more *stupid* than *spiteful*. One ought to insert somewhere that it is extremely good and edifying that Reinhold has so ruefully confessed his own earlier forgetting of God and egoism. And one ought to believe anyone who assures us he is a bad boy, since everyone knows himself better than anyone else: however, it is a grave offence that one is not allowed to include Kant and us in this universal ecclesiastical confession.

I could indeed have given Reinhold too much credit in my *Schreiben*. Either he still will not grasp it after this *Schreiben*, then his stupidity will be on display for all to see: or he will grasp it, and the scandal will be less for the public. This is what I thought, but with his scribblings in the *Merkur* he is now just aggravating the scandal.

7th August [1801]

My dear friend, this letter has remained unfinished for so long because of a certain external lethargy that is easily engendered in me by the kind of work that arose in the summer.

In all likelihood my new presentation will not appear at Michaelmas, but probably at the beginning of the new year. I have recast the *Wissenschaftslehre* again a couple of times and in a number of respects.

Nothing would be more desirable to me than to see fulfilled the hope that you gave me of spending your holidays here.

I am sending this letter to you via [August Wilhelm] Schlegel, whom I got to know better than ever during his recent stay here, and who has become even more cherished to me on account of his honesty and indefatigable diligence.

Take care, and retain my heartfelt affection,

Entirely yours,
Fichte.

20. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, October 3, 1801

Jena, October 3, 1801

It might be nearly impossible, my most worthy friend, to analyze all our points of difference in this letter and trace them back, point by point, to the first difference from which they spring. So I will primarily content myself with resolving just some of the misunderstandings and prejudices in which you are certainly confined, to judge by your last letter, and summarize my position in a few statements, since the intention of being more detailed has to date yielded nothing but the inevitable consequence of continued delay in answering [your letter].

The identity of the ideal-ground and the real-ground is = the identity of thought and intuition. With this identity, you express the highest speculative idea, the idea of the absolute, whose intuition resides¹⁶¹ in thought and whose thought resides in intuition. (For explanation, for the sake of brevity, I refer to Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* § 74, Remark.)¹⁶² Since this absolute identity of thought and intuition is the highest principle, it is, really conceived *as absolute indifference*, necessarily at the same time the highest being, as contrasted with finite and determined being (e.g., of the individual bodily thing), [which] always expresses a determinate difference of thought and intuition. Here the ideal and the real reciprocally distort¹⁶³ each other. The undistorted indifference of the two resides only in the absolute. In order to take the shortest route to the intuition of this absolute indifference and attain to the highest being necessarily and directly united with it, I ask you to think of absolute space, which is precisely the (again, intuited) highest identity of ideality and reality, the supreme transparency, clarity, the purest being that we intuit.—*For you*, being is thoroughly synonymous with reality, indeed with actuality.¹⁶⁴ But being κατ' ἐξοχήν¹⁶⁵ has no more opposite, since it is itself the absolute unity of the ideal and the real.

Now you simply want this highest being, which is no longer reality in contrast to ideality, to be conceived as pure agility, pure activity. But you cannot possibly fail to observe that absolute activity = absolute rest (=being), that an action can be predicated of the true absolute as little as it can be predicated of absolute space, its universal image (as was shown above), of which one can only say that it *is*, never that it is active. (And I hope that you conjoin the converse conclusion to this one, that whatever an activity can be predicated of cannot for that very reason be the true absolute.)

This absolute, I claimed in my *Presentation*, exists under the form of quantitative difference in the individual (this is intuition, which is always

a determinate item) and of quantitative indifference in the whole (this is thought).¹⁶⁶ (Grasped as a unity, it is therefore the absolute equality¹⁶⁷ of thought and intuition. It subsists within thought as much as in intuition, and vice versa; one is adequate to the other.) You say something similar about your final synthesis—which is simultaneously the incomprehensible real ground of the separate existence¹⁶⁸ of the individual and the ideal ground of the unity of all.¹⁶⁹ So in any case you elevate yourself to *this* [absolute] being which is not reality, not actuality—but raised above all opposition between the ideal and the real, which is their absolute identity. For you, however, this being is the *final* synthesis. But I might think that if it is also the highest [item], it is for that very reason the absolute, the unconditioned itself, hence unavoidably also the *first* from which we must proceed.

Either you must never depart from *seeing*, as you express yourself, and that precisely means from subjectivity, and then *every single I*, as you say once in the *Wissenschaftslehre*,¹⁷⁰ must be the absolute substance and remain so, or if you depart from it to an equally incomprehensible real ground, this whole reference to subjectivity is merely *preliminary*, something prior to finding the true principle; and I do not know how you will defend yourself if, after you have arrived at this [final] synthesis, you bring in another and go in the opposite direction, treating *this* second as the first [principle], and explain your [subjective] principle merely as a preliminary one and your philosophy as merely a propaedeutic, like the Kantian philosophy. For any investigation where the highest principle is the result, the last synthesis, is indeed propaedeutic. Forgive me if I anticipate this step and, before you have reached this point, have presumed to define what will be inevitable once you have arrived there.

You put this in a clearer light when you say “as concerns the substance, we might well be pretty much of one mind, though wholly different in presentation—but this is essential”; I might say that, *in order to maintain your system*, one must first *decide* to start from seeing and end with the absolute (the genuinely speculative), almost as in the Kantian philosophy the moral law must come first and God last if there is to be a system. The necessity to proceed from seeing¹⁷¹ confines you and your philosophy in a thoroughly conditioned series [of phenomena] in which no trace of the absolute can be encountered. Consciousness, or the feeling that it must have of itself, compels you in the *Vocation of Man* to transfer the speculative domain into the sphere of faith, since you simply cannot find it in your *knowing*¹⁷²; in my opinion there can as little be discussion of faith in philosophy as in geometry. In the same work you explained in so many words: the genuine proto-real,¹⁷³ i.e., the truly speculative, is nowhere to be found in knowing. Is this not proof enough that your ‘knowing’ is not absolute knowing, but some kind of knowing that is still conditioned, and which philosophy, if it should be predominant in it, will lower to the status of one science¹⁷⁴ among others?

What is now your 'highest synthesis' was at all events something unknown in your earlier presentations, for in these the moral world-order (doubtless what you now call the real ground of individuality and the ideal unity of all) is itself God; this no longer the case now, if I see correctly, and this changes the whole substance¹⁷⁵ of your philosophy to a considerable degree.

All of this, which I consider a sign of your approaching true speculation from the standpoint of mere philosophizing, also gives me the joyous hope that we will meet at the point which, by your former method, you more or less had to flee, and which moreover can never be reached by a gradual ascent from below, but can only be grasped immediately and in an absolute manner.

In your last letter¹⁷⁶ you seem to take back what you granted in your earlier one,¹⁷⁷ or perhaps to doubt whether you really penned it. For this reason it is perhaps not pointless to communicate to you verbatim the passage in question.

"I believe that I understand you quite well," you wrote, "and indeed that I had already done so beforehand. I just think that these principles do not follow from the previous principles of transcendentalism, but rather that they are opposed to them. That they can only be grounded in an even further expansion of transcendental philosophy, even in its principles, to which in any event we are urgently compelled by the demands of the time."¹⁷⁸

Then you announce that after the completion of the new presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre* this expansion will be your first task.

Your viewpoint implies¹⁷⁹ that your philosophy must appear to you to be the absolutely true philosophy merely because it is *simply not false*. Spinoza posits thought and extension as the two attributes of substance. He does not deny that everything that is can also be explained through the mere attribute of thought and through a mere modification¹⁸⁰ of infinite thought. This kind of explanation would certainly not turn out to be false, though it would not be absolutely true, but it is comprehended in the absolute itself. Something similar holds between us; which might explain to you in one way among others why, despite our initial and fundamental difference, I have nonetheless used idealism as a tool¹⁸¹ [and] thereby was indeed able to produce so much clarity and depth, as you admit.

To the real-ground of the separated state of individuals you give the qualification: *inconceivable*. It is indeed inconceivable for the reflective attitude of understanding¹⁸² that ascends from below, that gets caught in insoluble contradictions (Kant's antinomies) with the opposition of the finite (your separation) and the infinite (your unity of all), but not for *reason*¹⁸³ which posits absolute identity, the inseparable union of the finite with the infinite, as the first [principle] and proceeds from the eternal, which is [itself] neither finite nor infinite, but both in equally eternal fashion. This *reason-eternity*¹⁸⁴ is the authentic principle of all speculation and true idealism. It is that which annihilates the causal series of the finite, which it precedes by its essence

(*natura*)¹⁸⁵ in every moment of time the same way it primordially precedes time, just as, conversely, it *precedes* time in no other way than it now and forever does, namely by its nature.

You must forgive me if I say that a complete misunderstanding of my ideas runs through your whole letter, which is quite natural since you have not exactly taken the trouble to really understand them. By contrast, none of the ideas you have been kind enough to communicate to me in your letter is foreign to me. I also know, as you will perhaps admit to me, in part from my own use of them, all the tricks whereby idealism can be demonstrated as the sole necessary system. These sleights-of-hand which were perhaps appropriate against all your previous adversaries are without effect against me, since I am not your opponent, even if in all probability you are mine. I have already said above that I do not find your system false, since it is a necessary and integral part of mine.

It would have been quite desirable if you had always and on every occasion followed what you expressed in your last letter: “what idealism and realism are can only be investigated *within* the *Wissenschaftslehre*.” (From this it follows directly that the true theory of knowledge, i.e., genuine speculative philosophy, can as little be idealism as it can be realism. But have you not definitely enough characterized your philosophy as idealism?) You would then be able to more readily join in my claim that genuine philosophy can be completely indifferent externally, even if internally it can be different. This concept of the absolute indifference of the true system on the outside was completely adequate to justify for you the idea of my system as establishing two philosophies subsisting alongside each other.

I may have expressed myself clumsily enough in the *Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism*¹⁸⁶ in the first, raw and undeveloped sentiment that the truth might lie higher than idealism could go, nonetheless I can refer to this very early document of sentiment [for the same idea] that appeared to you no less on the occasion of the atheism conflict and forced you to fetch from faith the proto-real¹⁸⁷ (the speculative) that is absent in knowing (i.e., in idealism, to be precise). My idealistic and realistic philosophies are related directly and exactly as are your knowledge and faith, whose opposition, moreover, you still have not totally transcended, and if you do not know what to make of me on the former point, so for my part I have ceased to be able to follow you on the latter.

Those *Letters [on Dogmatism and Criticism]* may perhaps have allowed you to see at once “that I had not penetrated the *Wissenschaftslehre*.” This might have been the case much earlier, since, as those *Letters* began, I was in fact acquainted with only the first sections¹⁸⁸ of the [*Foundations of the Entire*] *Wissenschaftslehre*. But perhaps to this day I have not yet penetrated it in this sense, nor am I disposed to ever penetrate it in this sense, that in this penetration I am what is penetrated. I have never had the opinion of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and have it

even less now, that it is the book by which henceforth everyone would be and must be instructed in philosophizing, even if perhaps judgment in philosophical matters would be considerably easier if it simply required a written testimonial from you that one had understood it or not understood it.

If I tell someone that there are myths in the Old Testament and he were to answer: how could that be, since it teaches the unity of God, would it be my fault if this person could not hear the word ‘mythology’¹⁸⁹ without appending it to the trivial idea of stories of [pagan] gods¹⁹⁰? Something like this happens to me with many people with the concept of ‘philosophy of nature.’¹⁹¹ Is it my fault if one ascribes to ‘nature’ no other concept than what every chemist or pharmacist has? But Fichte, who has completely different weapons [to use] against me, makes it all too easy [for me] if he deigns only to refute me with such an idea. I marvel all the more that you make of ‘philosophy of nature’ such an arbitrary idea that you yourself admit that this side of my system is a completely unknown region to you. You say “the sensible world, or (??) nature is simply nothing but the appearance of immanent light.”¹⁹² Is it possible, I thought as I considered this, that it does not occur to Fichte that to prove *exactly this* might be the purpose of philosophy of nature? –How sad I am that you would not be convinced of this by reading my recent presentation.¹⁹³

Your view that you have annihilated nature with your system is not unintelligible, though for the greater part of it, on the contrary, you do not get beyond nature. Whether I make the series of conditioned [things or events] real or ideal is, speculatively considered, a matter of complete indifference,¹⁹⁴ since in the one case as in the other, I do not step beyond the finite. You believe you have fulfilled the whole demand of speculation through the latter [viz., taking the path of idealism to explain conditioned appearance]; *and here is one chief point on which we differ.*

From the third basic principle [of the original presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre*] onwards, with which you arrive at the sphere of divisibility, of reciprocal limitation, i.e., [the sphere] of the finite, your philosophy is a continuous series of finite [items]¹⁹⁵—a higher causal series. The true annihilation of nature (in *your* sense) cannot consist in accepting that it is real only in an ideal sense, but only in bringing the finite into absolute identity with the infinite, that is, in conceding that there is nothing outside *the eternal*, nothing finite in the real (common) sense of the term nor in the ideal (your) sense.

It is sufficiently known to me in what small region of consciousness nature might fall according to your idea of it. It has for you absolutely no speculative significance, only a teleological one. But should you actually be of the opinion, e.g., that there is light only so that rational beings when they talk to one another can also see each other, and there is air only so that when they hear each other they can also speak to one another?¹⁹⁶

I have nothing to remark about what you say further on about an idealism that tolerates a realism alongside itself, except that there you are caught in the most crucial misunderstanding of me, which is just too far-reaching to resolve in a single letter, especially since I can refer only to my latest presentation on this matter. Should this not be sufficient, I must place my hope on future discussions between you and me on this central point.

You will shortly receive a philosophical dialog from me, which I hope you will read.¹⁹⁷ The continuation of my *Presentation*¹⁹⁸ will also appear this month and in coming months.

From my side, I shall withhold all categorical judgments about your system as a whole until the *New Presentation* [of the *Wissenschaftslehre*] is published. That goes without saying. Likewise, I expect you to wait for the completion of my *Presentation* and that you really read this before you conceive and express a verdict on it. Such turns of phrase as “. . . as far as I have read your exposition” might not exactly have the best effect on the public.

But should the wish that the differences between us not be bruited about more widely be taken to mean that I will wait only until you take the opportunity to make them known, or that meanwhile I allow you to extol me in announcements of the new *Wissenschaftslehre* as your “talented collaborator,”¹⁹⁹ while in *Nicolai's Leben* and reviews in the *Allg.D.B.*,²⁰⁰ the ground is publicly cut from underneath me in a thinly veiled way with the remark that I do not understand you,²⁰¹ you can well see that this suggestion is a bit unfair.

That my philosophy is different from yours I regard as a very slight evil, one that of necessity I can still tolerate. But that I wanted to expound your [philosophy] and was not even fortunate enough to do that—dear Fichte, this is really too hard to bear, especially since, if the first is conceded [i.e., that I wished to expound your philosophy], your word alone, without any reason, suffices to establish the second [namely, that I failed in that task]. So if you do not want a formal declaration of the difference [between us], then at least do not, as you did in the last announcement, extend to me the wholly undeserved favor of accepting me as your collaborator; for this adoption before [the eyes of] the *public* comes at a time when you, *for yourself*, could have already known to your own satisfaction that I do not have the same goal as you.

Calm about the end and sure of my cause, for the time being I gladly leave it to each to discover for himself our relationship, but I also cannot deprive anyone of his sharp sight or seek to dissemble in any way. So just today, a book by a very talented person was published which bears the title: *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*²⁰²; I had no part in it, but also could in no way whatsoever prevent it.

You have forgotten to send the *Crystal Clear Report*. But it had come into my hands anyway. The idealism presented therein seems fairly psychological to

me, almost like that in Lichtenberg's posthumous writings.²⁰³ But it saddened me too that under the incidental pursuits of philosophers you include lens-grinding, which as is well known Spinoza worked at vigorously, who, though he did occupy himself with some other things outside of philosophy, was still a very great philosopher.

Be well and remain well-disposed to me. With sincerest respect and most upright intentions [I am] your

Schelling

21. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, October 8, 1801

Berlin, the 8th Oct. 1801²⁰⁴

It is quite true that with a single letter it is virtually impossible to be convinced which of us is guilty of greater errors and prejudices—and—if this is the case—philosophizes superficially. The truths you expound in your last letter are also well-known to me; however all your declarations about *me* and *my* opinions are based on a lack of understanding and a belittling of my standpoint.

I can tell you our point of difference in a few words.—You say “the absolute” (concerning *which* and whose *determination* I completely agree with you, and whose intuition I have also possessed for a long time) “as I claimed in my *Presentation*, exists under the form of quantitative difference.”²⁰⁵ This is indeed what you assert; and it is *precisely because of this* that I found your system to be in error and rejected the *Presentation* of your system—because no inference or discussion can be correct which is based on a principle that does not hold. Spinoza does exactly the same, and all dogmatism in general, and this is the *πρωτον ψευδος*.²⁰⁶ The absolute would not be the absolute if it existed under some kind of form. But where does this form come from under which the absolute *appears*—in any event I agree with you that the form is *quantity*—but where is this form located?²⁰⁷—Or again, how does the *one* become an *infinity*, and then a totality of the manifold?—That is the question that a consistent speculation still has to solve, and which you necessarily have to ignore because you already find this form simultaneously in and with the absolute. Right here, in a region you have closed off through your new system, and which one can with certainty say that it was never known to you, lies the idealism of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and Kantian idealism too: not far down below, where you locate it.

Please have the good will to reflect on this point, which is unavoidable for you, and reflect on how you could have possibly overlooked it—(namely because you proceed directly to the absolute with your thinking, without remembering that it is your thinking, and that it could certainly only be that which is *formed*

through its own immanent laws under the hand of the Absolute)—then you will soon become acquainted with true idealism, and realize how you have continually misunderstood me.

Your letter has a second part that is painful for me to touch upon. How is it possible that you cannot communicate with others without offending, and that you so willingly think that the others you deal with are *cowardly* and *false*? Have the decency to put yourself in my place, as I expressly tried to put myself in yours, when I had to declare that no one, absolutely no one had understood me.²⁰⁸ Was I supposed to have acted as though you had never existed or written anything? In hindsight I see that this obviously would have been best; but dear Schelling, at that time I did not yet have any idea about your hyper-sensitivity and the true feelings that one had instructed you to have against me—ineradicably it seems. It was only later that you made them known to me. I thought this manner of treating things to be the friendliest.—I naturally had to believe that you had *wanted* to present transcendental idealism in your *Transcendental Idealism* (this was your most recent text that I had in my hands at that time)—the sole possible transcendental idealism, namely the one available to the world in Kant's and my writings—but it was obvious that you did not understand it—and that you still have not understood it, and that if you continue on the path you are taking that will never understand it.—“At that time, when I said this *before the [eyes of the] public*, I was supposed to have known, *for myself*, that you had a goal that was entirely different to mine”?²⁰⁹ My dear friend, at *what point in time* was I supposed to have known this? In the Introduction to your new *Presentation* you assure me, indeed, you even assure me in your letter containing the above words, that we could still reach agreement on one point.

Now you even want to hold me responsible for the Nicolaitean interpretations! The Nicolaites are going to prepare a sumptuous feast when they see that they have succeeded in their aims with you.

There may conceivably be other reasons why I did not want to discuss our differences in public, apart from simply wanting to wait until *I* was in a position to talk about them. I had hoped that you would reflect on this—and I admit that I hope you still do—and then we could avoid the trouble and embarrassment that would doubtlessly ensue from a public dispute between us, and an eminent mind like yours could be retained for what I consider to be the right cause. Furthermore, I never intended that you should refrain from doing something you wanted to do because of our friendship or trying to protect me. I personally am absolutely determined not to mention you in public until either our differences are resolved, if they can be resolved, or you

compel me to do so through an attack; and in the latter case it is clear that I will behave in conformity with the respect I have for your talent and our former friendly relationship.

I would genuinely like our correspondence to continue; yet only on the condition that you refrain from personal insults. You do not want me to become bitter, and steel myself against you whenever I catch sight of your handwriting and your seal, which in the past always gave me so much pleasure.

Fichte.

22. Schelling to Fichte in Berlin, January 4, 1802 [Lost]²¹⁰

23. Fichte to Schelling, January 15, 1802

After receiving your letter of the 4th of this month, and after having read the first issue of your [*Kritisches*] *Journal*, I will first of all reply to your letter.

Beginning with what was said to [A.W.] *Schlegel* alone—who, along with *Tieck*, came to visit me—about a report of a declaration from you against me, I find that this kind of report, as well as everything you infer from it, does not warrant the predicate ‘gossip.’²¹¹ For if you did not make such a declaration [against me], then it obviously does not exist, and the rumor cancels itself out.

The course of events may be summarized as follows: A thoroughly insignificant dilettante and experienced businessman, whose name is not in Meusel’s educated Germany,²¹² and will never be in it, but who also receives all the journals that I either get very late or not at all and when they arrive fresh from the post often informs me about interesting pieces, told me on the way home from an event one evening that you had stated in the *A.L.Z.*²¹³ that you *want to completely break with me*. When I protested against this he repeated that he had *indeed read such a thing*, and *promised to send me the paper*. Typically, he still has not done it. However, since then I have procured a few issues of the *A.L.Z.* from my reading circle and assume that the good fellow probably mixed up the *Stuttgarter Allgemeine Zeitung* (which I do not receive) with the *A.L.Z.*, and probably therefore meant the Böttiger gossip reprimanded by you on page 120 of your [journal] that I did not know about²¹⁴, and in his confused brain transformed it into a note from you, and perhaps even confused the name of *Schelle*²¹⁵ with Schelling.

You should see from this that your presumptions of malice and spite on my part for mentioning this report are unfounded. The man clearly did not mean or intend any ill-will. If I believed your request that the matter would be cleared up by telling you his name then I would do it; and I would be happy to do so if you really insist. I only ask that his name does not become known among our friends here, because this otherwise honest and upright man, who

continually seeks to obtain the confidence of me and my friends, would become exposed to nasty ridicule.

An altogether different kind of question, however, is the following: how did I end up thinking this report to be believable?—Firstly, the objection that Schlegel also immediately put to me: that you were not on good terms with the *A.L.Z.* etc., something which would not matter to me, for why could you not just use them as a *printer*, which is their role as an organ of information; similarly, I for example did not forbid or have any suspicion when the publisher of my *Crystal Clear Report* advertised the book. However, I immediately assumed that the man who reported this to me had also been confused about the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. For there was indeed an announcement in this newspaper that your *Journal* was to be published by Cotta, coupled with remarks that were similar to those in your last letter, of which I received news through Cotta in a way that recalls the statement you made to him one year ago about our joint project.²¹⁶—Furthermore, this same newspaper published my *Announcement* of a new version of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, the one containing the passage which caused you to make a number of curious remarks to me.—In short, why all these words! I am enclosing again the last section of your letter to me of which you presumably have not kept a copy.²¹⁷ From the underlined passages, especially the ones with N.B., you can easily see why I found such a report to be improbable, but not entirely impossible.

In the same letter you indeed say that you will refrain from passing any decisive judgment on my system until the publication of the new presentation [of the *Wissenschaftslehre*]. But the passage immediately after that, and the not particularly respectful things you say about my mode of thought, could lead me to believe that you had possibly changed your mind. And on account of my [delayed] reply to your letter, [you could have thought] that I had not *accepted* this [decision],²¹⁸ and in accordance with the conventional policy of writers (anyone who had thought this of me in this letter, cannot be upset at me if I *en consequence* also thought this of him) wished to prepare yourself against a feared attack from my side.

I am also enclosing my reply²¹⁹ to your last letter which I did not send at the time; I preferred to keep quiet, because I did not want to further excite your already over-stimulated sensitivity.

Thus, this is how things stood when I received the above report. And now you have answered the second question yourself.

While reading your letter²²⁰ again I find it of more significance that you believe I have only been *waiting for* a declaration from you; no, as I said, it has already *happened*: I only *circulated* it further. I have only communicated it to W.[ilhelm] *Schlegel*, in the presence of *Tieck* and Fr.[iedrich] *Schlegel*, and no one else apart from that. I questioned him on that occasion about the well-known old story, *in conformity with our written agreement*,²²¹ and *he assured me he knew nothing* [about it].—You appear to place an important *accent* on the word ‘*gossip*,’²²² and hold it against me for having believed such a thing.—Dear Schelling, if you only knew how often people have written to me, and how traveling friends have confirmed for me, that since my absence from Jena, in your lectures you have made a habit of poking fun at both me and the ‘reflected point’²²³ at which I have remained. If you are now implying that I have never even slightly hinted at this to you, then you should be less willing to believe in my belief in gossip.

You know how I behaved earlier when you actually accused me of the basest gossip.²²⁴ You see the manner in which I have accepted your attached remarks.²²⁵ You should deduce from this the depth of confidence, love, respect, and the indestructible hope I have for what is best in you.—You can therefore imagine the joy that your letter of the 4th [of this month] gave me, and the thoroughly worthy and decent manner in which I was treated in your [*Kritisches*] *Journal*. You have, and will continue to have in me, the warmest and most devoted friend, as long as I can openly be without appearing spiteful. If sooner or later it occurs to you to again treat me in a way that ignores everything we have both been to each other, as you have now done for the second time, then I will regret it, but remain patient, and wait until you have come to your senses again.

Hence, it is not actually our scientific differences that could stand personally between us, but only personal insults, the likes of which I myself have never uttered, and which I ask and sincerely hope that you will refrain from in the future.

As for the declaration that you have attributed to me in the situation at hand, please allow me to explain my reasoning about this.

I despise public opinion too much and strongly believe that our moral character is solely our own affair and the affair of our friends, if we have them; I further believe that I am able to reach my scientific goal, whatever people may think about my mode of thought—or again, if I have placed too much value on these things than I do, I also believe that my entire being has not made such an impression on the public that they would even care about viewing me as cowardly, mendacious, or spiteful, but which so often seems to be the case with those who have come to know me better. I therefore decided and took

the opportunity in public to say that I would not publicly express myself on this point unless there was an urgency to do so; and not because I wanted to spare a particular person of whom I was not sure whether he is worthy of being spared or not, but out of self-respect. I believe I have sufficient self-respect to not have to reply to an accusation on this point.

It is a different matter if you and Niethammer are now unfairly under suspicion because of this. And I believe that the two of you, in the most upright manner, and with the agreement of both, have come into *possession* of this information, and are therefore justified in doing whatever you wish with it. And although it may seem so, it does not in fact require my approval, because I agree with it in every point.²²⁶

Thus, on the face of it, it is entirely left to your discretion [to decide what to do], which is obvious, I think.

It is furthermore good of you to seek my advice as to *how* this decision, if it is to be made, should be best taken.—There are only two men in this domain whose opinion, particularly that of the first person, means something to me: *Goethe* and *Schiller*. I am fully aware that you are also close to the former. If you want, also inform Goethe in my name and on my behalf that you have written to me about this point and what I have replied to you. Give him all the facts in the affair and ask him if he has any advice.

Do you know exactly all the circumstances [of my dismissal from Jena]? I will add the most relevant which could be unknown to you or which you might have overlooked.—The man [in question]²²⁷ meets my wife while out on a walk²²⁸ and starts talking—without there ever being a conversation of this nature beforehand—to her, an anxious, overwhelmed foreigner, of his attraction to a land of freedom like her fatherland, Switzerland, and *of his decision* to accompany us there if the fluctuating negotiations were to take a turn for the worse. After hearing this, I visit him the following morning, and during a walk he repeats the same thing to me, and *I* suggest the provisional measure of a *first* letter.²²⁹—He shares my opinion; I send him an outline of the letter, he tells me in a note that he fully agrees; I keep the *original* of the note in the appropriate file. The well-known rescript²³⁰ arrives; he knew how to get hold of it and privately informs me, holding up its circulation, even though I had long made my decision, until he had harassed and tormented a second letter out of me in the next 24 hours.²³¹—This second letter was *his* work and not *mine*, as anyone who is familiar with my manner of thinking and style would immediately see. He had only wanted to cover himself in the interpretation of this second letter—which I wrote, even though I clearly saw through all of this, just to put an end to the incessant torments.—I *wrote* what I would never forgive myself to have even *thought*.

I do not want to praise you because I believe I would be praising myself insofar as I tell you how much inner joy your journal gave me from the start to the finish.—Poor Zettel²³²; I almost feel sorry for him, the way it was secretly sent. As for *Krug*²³³, the only thing I know about him is that he is a poor subject, and I have gleaned morsels of his philosophy from the gushing reviews in the *N.D.B.*²³⁴ I would have scarcely believed that such a wretched earthly creature could exist in our time.

If not for any other reason, the earlier enclosed letter had already moved me to touch upon our scientific differences in the present letter. You will no doubt smile at the underlined passage in the letter, which is *precisely why I have underlined it*.²³⁵ Numerous passages in the first issue of the [*Kritisches*] *Journal*²³⁶ show that there absolutely cannot be any quantity and relation in the absolute—and yet you have indeed written the passage cited in my letter, and your entirely new presentation forcefully asserts something similar.²³⁷—And—I will add—it has to be like this.—Your being²³⁸ and even your knowledge, also only exist *in relation*, and since you know and talk about both, you have to explain the two by means of something *higher*, which for this very reason you would also have to know. Your system is only *negative* with regard to the Absolute, the [same] accusation you have leveled at *my* system—as you understand it at least; and your system does not raise itself to a *fundamental reflex*,²³⁹ and accordingly you believe that my system has equally remained at a *point of reflection*,²⁴⁰ as I once said of the Kantian system.

There is a *relative mode of knowledge, the counterpart of being*²⁴¹—Under this relative knowledge, there is indeed yet another being. You have always situated the *Wissenschaftslehre* at the standpoint of *this mode of knowledge*. The counterpart of *this mode* of knowledge is the highest being, and for this reason it is absolute being.—*Being*, I say. You now believe you have elevated yourself beyond the *Wissenschaftslehre* to the concept of this being; and you now unite [both] counterparts—not in a *material sense* through insight, but in a *formal sense*, since the system needs unity; and not through *intuition* (which would indeed supply something positive) but through *thinking* (which only postulates a *relation*)—in a *negative identity* that is the *non-difference* of knowledge and being, in an indifference-point etc. But if you consider, for instance, the most absolute being that you could establish, you will find in it the distinct characteristic of a composition which understandably cannot conceptually occur without *division*. This explains why you also correctly derive (relative) knowledge from this being; and being in turn from this knowledge. You also find something similar in relative knowledge.—Your [indifference-]point therefore lies higher than the one in relative knowledge that you ascribe to the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

It is number 2 if the former is number 3. But there is an even higher one, in which precisely *being* and its *counterpart*, knowledge, are both divided as well as composed. This point is also a [mode of] knowledge (*not* knowledge of *something*, but *absolute* knowledge), and the *Wissenschaftslehre* has always been located here, and for this reason is *transcendental idealism*. Among others, it denotes this by the expression ‘I,’ in which the I—obviously the relative I—and the Not-I are first divided.—I also wanted to clarify this in an earlier letter²⁴² when I said that the absolute (obviously the absolute of philosophy) only ever remains *a seeing*.²⁴³ You replied that it cannot be a seeing of something, which is wholly correct, but this was not what was meant; and this is where the matter has to rest.—This is what Spinoza does. The *One* should be *All* (more precisely, the *infinite*, for there is no totality here), and vice versa; which is then entirely correct. But it cannot indicate to us *how* the *One* *becomes* the *All*, and the *All*, the point of transition, the turning point, and the point of their *real* identity; hence, it loses the *One* if it grasps it from the *All*, and the *All* when it grasps the *One*. This is why he also describes the *two* basic forms of the Absolute: being, and thinking, without any further proof,²⁴⁴ just as you also do²⁴⁵—which is not at all permitted by the *Wissenschaftslehre*.—But it is fully clear to me that the Absolute can only have one absolute *expression*,²⁴⁶ i.e., in relation to manifoldness, it can only be an expression that is thoroughly *One*, simple, and eternally equal to itself; and this is precisely *absolute knowledge*. The Absolute *itself*, however, is neither being, nor cognition, nor identity, nor the indifference of the two: but it is precisely—the *Absolute*—and to say anything else about it is a waste of time.²⁴⁷

This obviously implies that a transcendental idealism of the kind you find in the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and which you have presented in your works, is nothing else than formalism, one-sidedness, at most a separate section cut from a bad plan of a *Wissenschaftslehre*: it follows that the philosophy of nature is not a special pole of philosophy, but simply a part of the latter; this means that if it is viewed in this way it is not at all opposed to idealism (for it is situated at the centre of this) but only to *ethics*, to the theory of intelligible being.

If these scattered suggestions do not seem to be entirely unworthy of your attention; or if you could accord again some weight to that advantageous opinion you once had of me, since as you yourself admit to me, apart from remaining behind, in earlier times I still managed to produce some decent things, and I therefore do not want to lose a whole year of unprejudiced work and research—then I would obviously desire that both you and Hegel do not raise anything further against this point of dispute, because it would, I believe, only exacerbate the misunderstandings; at least until my new presentation has appeared, which will be published at Easter. I do not want to make you, but solely Spinoza into my opponent. This is not to spare you—I am not so petty to think that you require this—but simply to avoid causing further offense.

Thus, it is up to you to continue like this or be accommodating, whatever you think best.

My dear and revered friend, I hope that this letter clearly expresses my respect and love for you, and that I do not need to conclude it with any special guarantee.

Completely yours,
Fichte.

24. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, January 25, 1802

Jena, January 25, 1802

First of all, I am very glad to give up on knowing the name of the person who believed he had read a declaration by me about you. You are right, it suffices that it never existed.

As concerns the personal affronts which you accuse me of making, I ask you not to count as one of them [the fact] that I do not conceal that everything in my letter²⁴⁸ which can have this appearance seems to me only to repeat the spirit of the tone you take against me, while [for my part] I still believe that I am not entitled to put myself on an equal footing with you or to propose something like e.g., your offer for me to come around,²⁴⁹ made just in the last letter. And moreover I ask you to consider whether, everything else aside, a convoluted remark about a ‘friend’ like the one in the *Announcement* of the [new presentation of the] *Wissenschaftslehre* might not exacerbate a rightful irritation of the situation, compared to a straightforward [account of] everything that happened.

I have always been guided by a straightforward and sincere disposition towards you and will steadily continue to be in the future. I permit myself to communicate *to you* only what I think about our relationship, and have in no word denied my respect for you to a third party. But not long ago, a communication to a third party on your side [of the dispute] came to my attention (among others), wherein it is said that you intend to present my “pretension etc. in all its weakness” and that I understand the *Wissenschaftslehre* no better than Friedrich Nicolai does.²⁵⁰ Moreover, there are several expressions [contained therein] that would be difficult to justify as long as the respect [for me] endures that you avow even in the most extreme circumstances, whatever they be.

I was amused by the first argument in the guarded answer that you just sent concerning the quantitative [character] of my absolute, which derives not from my *Presentation* §. 25, but from the way that you overlook the second half

of the sentence in my *letter* where it is said, “This absolute exists (appears) under the form of quantitative difference in the individual and, to the same degree, [under the form of] indifference in the totality.” Moreover, I also had to smile over the way that, in the communication mentioned, the same presupposition, that I “carelessly²⁵¹ allow the absolute to exist in quantitative guise,”—is happily again employed as the chief argument against me, whereupon I was really pleased to find at the end of what you wrote signs of an indirect confirmation of your direct utterance, “We might pretty much²⁵² agree on this matter.”

It is obvious that certain things in the situation have changed to a considerable degree since my last letter. The clarification [of my position relative to yours] that you requested from me does not exist, but your ambiguous expression in the *Announcement* of the *Wissenschaftslehre* and the letter to Herr Schad do indeed exist.

The upshot is that I will await your *New Presentation* [of the *Wissenschaftslehre*]. If you make Spinoza your imaginary opponent in it, that does not seem to me to be the right way to proceed, since you may manage to refute more than what is contained in Spinoza (presuming that it will not be less), and then I shall have double the work that would otherwise be necessary in having to sharply distinguish what belongs to him and to me, though I in no way think I have to fear that anything of his will be misunderstood under my name, or anything of mine under his.

That is all that I can reply to you right now. It is still my plan and my hope to greet you in person in the spring.²⁵³

Schelling.

Introduction to the Texts of J. G. Fichte

The *Announcement*

The small text entitled *Ankündigung* (Announcement) bears the date November 4, 1800 and was originally published in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in January 1801. It was only reprinted for the first time in 1988 in the *J. G. Fichte Gesamtausgabe*.¹ As the name suggests, its purpose was to announce Fichte's new and reworked presentation of his system of philosophy. Although brief in length, the *Announcement* is significant for both personal and philosophical reasons.

On the personal level, the *Announcement* is notorious in the dispute between Fichte and Schelling on account of Fichte's casual remark at the beginning of the text that he could not say whether his "talented collaborator, Professor Schelling, has been more successful at paving the way for the transcendental standpoint" than he himself had been able to secure. Schelling's later displeasure at this passage was perhaps a result of Caroline Schlegel's initial influence, as she was not entirely convinced of the innocence of Fichte's remark and even pressed Schelling to seek Goethe's opinion.² In time, Schelling too appears to have interpreted the remark as a sly aside signifying his lack of independence in philosophical matters.³ Fichte rejected any ill intention and attributed Schelling's overreaction to his "hyper-sensitive" personality.⁴ Thus, this seemingly innocuous remark proved to be one of the catalysts for the eventual rupture between the two philosophers.

On the philosophical level, Fichte's *Announcement* is significant for at least two reasons. First, it provides an analysis of the relationship between the *Wissenschaftslehre* and mathematics that is unique in Fichte's oeuvre. Second, it contains significant statements concerning the revolutionary nature of the *Wissenschaftslehre* vis-à-vis Kant's critical philosophy, especially after the latter (as well as Jacobi) had publicly rejected Fichte's system in August 1799 as being "mere logic."⁵

Fichte's comparisons between mathematics and the *Wissenschaftslehre* turn on his conviction that they share three principal distinctions in common. First,

in his view, they possess the same immediate self-evidence (*unmittelbare Evidenz*); that is to say, like the axioms of geometry, the Fichtean starting proposition exhibits a transparency and necessity whose truth is immediately apparent to the mind. Second, they jointly share a determinacy (*Bestimmtheit*) or quality of universality that allows every rational being to intuit the same invariable intuition. In this respect the external signs (or language) of the system are of an inferior status compared with the necessity and transparency of the immediate inner intuition. Third, both the *Wissenschaftslehre* and mathematics harbor the same irrefutability (*Unwiderlegbarkeit*). Here Fichte is not arguing for infallibility, but simply pointing out a logical consequence of his intuition and postulate-based model of philosophy. That is to say, as with any self-evident axiomatic proposition, Fichte's own first principle is by definition not capable of proof and is therefore indemonstrable. Finally, in the *Announcement*, Fichte places himself squarely in the Platonic tradition by suggesting mathematics to be a propaedeutic for his system. For Fichte, mathematics is an excellent intellectual training to equip the prospective student of philosophy with the requisite comprehension of the "immediate self-evidence and universality" of all postulates.

The 1799 public rejections of the *Wissenschaftslehre* by both Kant and Jacobi, as well as his dismissal from Jena during the same period, were obviously a huge blow to Fichte. Undaunted, he took stock and partly laid the blame on his own imperfect presentations, believing in 1800 that he had at last acquired the skill to clearly communicate his scientific philosophy to others. And although Fichte continued to stress the full continuity between his system and Kantian transcendental idealism until the end of his life, in the *Announcement* Fichte appears to gain a new understanding of the innovativeness of the *Wissenschaftslehre* within the history of philosophy.⁶ If in 1793–1794 he had believed his accomplishment to consist in the discovery of a new *Grundsatz* or first principle for a philosophical system that was still essentially Kantian in spirit, in late 1800 Fichte proclaimed its newness to consist in its scientific nature, in the discovery of a "*brand new science*" whose "very idea did not previously exist." Fichte maintains that the innovativeness of this science should above all be considered an epistemological one. In the "Doctrine of Method" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant had underscored the differences between the methods of mathematics and philosophy by arguing that the latter is a form of rational cognition (*Vernunftbegriff*) based on concepts, whereas the former is a form of rational cognition based on the construction of concepts.⁷ For Fichte, however, the key to the scientific success of mathematics lies in the fact that it is a form of rational cognition based on pure intuition. And because it is possible for a scientific mode of cognition based on pure intuition to exist in the sphere of mathematics, in the *Announcement* Fichte argues for a similar status to be accorded to the self-evident intuitions of his philosophy.

Thus, Jacobi's 1799 negative criticism of the *Wissenschaftslehre* as "*mathesis pura*" is turned to a positive by Fichte.⁸ In this spirit, at the close of 1800 Fichte

could now declare the *Wissenschaftslehre* to be the cognition of cognition itself, a higher “philosophical” form of mathematics or *mathesis* because its aim was to examine all the various modes of cognition based on pure intuition. Or as Fichte puts it in the *Announcement*: The *Wissenschaftslehre* is the “*mathesis of mathesis*.”

The New Version of the *Wissenschaftslehre*

The *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* (*Neue Bearbeitung der Wissenschaftslehre*) is a fragmentary and unfinished text from late 1800, and the first reworked presentation of Fichte’s system after his dismissal from Jena and transfer to Berlin. It remained unknown to the public during Fichte’s lifetime and was only published for the first time in 1979 in volume II/5 of his collected works.⁹ The text translated here is an excerpt of approximately half of Fichte’s *New Version*.

As just seen for the *Announcement*, at this time Fichte was preoccupied with the cognitive affinities between the *Wissenschaftslehre* and mathematics. This current concern with mathematical cognition and method also may explain Fichte’s unusual decision to attempt a presentation of the *New Version* in *ordine geometrica demonstrare*; or in his words from the first chapter: “The procedure is entirely the same as in *mathematics*.” Unbeknown to Fichte, this was exactly the same mode of exposition that Schelling had chosen for his *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, which was written around the same time and appeared in May 1801. With both philosophers one might be quick to imagine the influence of Spinoza here. Although this is true in Schelling’s case, things are not so clear-cut for Fichte. For, despite his praise for the achievements of Spinoza and his mode of presentation,¹⁰ in his letters to Schelling during this period Fichte claimed that Spinoza would actually be his philosophical opponent.¹¹ Another possible candidate as an influence on Fichte’s mathematical thinking is Leibniz, whose theory of a universal characteristic is mentioned at the conclusion of the *Announcement*. With the *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, Fichte had hoped to perhaps fulfill Leibniz’s dream for a philosophical *mathesis* by expressing it in a universal characteristic or formal universal language. Finally, as mentioned above, the *New Version* could also be read as a response to some of Jacobi’s criticisms in his “Open Letter” of March 3–21, 1799, where he had dismissed the mathematical pretensions of the Fichtean philosophy as “inverted Spinozism” (*umgekehrter Spinozismus*), because for him it was a form of “materialism without matter.”¹² A final interesting point in this connection is Fichte’s esteem for Goethe—for as Fichte notes in the main body of the text—the *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* was to be dedicated to Goethe, to “the *creator* and inventor of the German imagination.”

In any event, Fichte’s stated philosophical goal in the introduction to the *New Version* was a conscious and vivid analysis of the acts of free thinking and to explicate again one of the major themes found in the Fichtean corpus: that of *intellectual intuition*. In section no. § 1 of the text, Fichte endeavored

to justify the employment of intellectual intuition by stipulating it to be the transcendental condition for every possible consciousness.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the *New Version* is Fichte's ongoing philosophical dialogue with himself, especially his deliberations on the correct choice of terminology. He repeatedly attempts to uncover and determine the precise role, function, and interactions between different types of philosophical first principles. In line with a *more geometrico* exposition, his text is composed of eight main sections, each one beginning with what is termed a *theorem*.¹³ Each theorem is followed by various "postulates," which are in turn followed by a varying number of "corollaries" (sometimes up to six). But Fichte ran into difficulties with this geometrical terminology at the very outset. In Chapter 1 he had selected as a first principle a proposition that he had labeled a postulate: "*Postulate*. Immediate self-consciousness is the necessary condition of every other consciousness." However, his argument soon came to a halt, because a postulate for him should be a self-evident principle referring to a definite mental act. This is obviously not the case for this proposition. Hence, Fichte changes his mind and chooses the term *theorem* instead.—

He then realizes that although this proposition does indeed assert a necessary and universal truth, as is the case for a theorem, it cannot be demonstrated by means of concepts, as stipulated by his definition of a theorem. Moreover, the proposition is similar to a postulate insofar as it requires intuition, yet it lacks the essential characteristic of self-evidence. In consequence, Fichte is faced with a number of linguistic and philosophical dilemmas. Although he persists with the term *theorem* for the remainder of the *New Version*, immediately after drawing up Theorem 1 he could not help but make a kind of mental footnote to himself to employ the term *postulate* in the sense of the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* of 1798–1799 (i.e., as something self-evident and immediately transparent to the mind).

Fichte eventually abandoned his project of a *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* after only three months. It is not clear whether he did so on account of his inability to satisfactorily resolve certain difficulties—such as these terminological ones, or if the publication of Schelling's *Presentation*—which as noted was also set out in a "geometric" manner—also played a role. In any case, the *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* may be viewed as a transitional text in Fichte's oeuvre. On the one hand, its concern with first principles and intellectual intuition exhibit clear parallels with the earlier Jena versions of his system, especially the beginning sections of the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo*. On the other hand, Fichte's awareness of the problematic formal and logical aspects of any system based on first principles hint at his increasing dissatisfaction with such a mode of exposition. This led him to again completely rethink the starting point of his system, and commence the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1801–1802 not with a foundational postulate or *Grundsatz*, but with an analysis of the nature of knowledge itself.

Fichte's Commentaries on Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* and *Presentation* (1800–1801)

Fichte wrote three short commentaries on Schelling's work between 1800 and 1801. Although the correspondence between Fichte and Schelling sheds important light on their views of each other's writings, some of their harshest and most detailed criticisms were either not sent or remained unpublished during their lifetimes (see editors' main introduction above). In this sense, the following three commentaries constitute valuable supplementary material to Fichte's overall thoughts on Schelling's works.

While Reading Schelling's "Transcendental Idealism"

In various letters from 1800, Schelling solicited Fichte for feedback on his recently published *System of Transcendental Idealism*. In his letter of May 14, 1800 Schelling wrote that he had requested the publisher Gabler to send Fichte a copy of his new *System*, and he also asked Fichte for his opinion of the work (cf. letter 1 above). In a subsequent letter to Fichte dated August 18, 1800, Schelling again drew attention to his *System* by mentioning Reinhold's "dreadful" review of it. Fichte briefly referred to Schelling's work in his reply of September 6, 1800, but only to say that he had not read Reinhold's review.

By the end of September, Schelling was still at a loss to know Fichte's thoughts, and in a letter that is no longer extant, he again appears to have requested his opinion, and asking if Fichte had received his copy of the *System of Transcendental Idealism* yet. That Fichte had in fact received his copy is first clear from his fleeting but fateful mention of it in his *Announcement* dated November 4, 1800. Fichte finally replied to Schelling's query in his letter of November 15, 1800. After initially complimenting Schelling on his "brilliant presentation," Fichte outlined a number of his criticisms. He especially took exception to Schelling setting the philosophy of nature and transcendental philosophy in opposition, and believed that Schelling had in fact confused the spheres of ideal activity and real activity (cf. letter 13).

These criticisms are slightly expanded on in Fichte's small commentary "While Reading Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism*." Fichte's text is notable for his focus on Schelling's classification of the sciences, as well as him imagining Schelling's possible replies to his criticisms. The latter especially concern their divergent views on the origin and nature of self-consciousness, being, and knowledge, leading Fichte to come to the following conclusion: "Schelling's concept of transcendental idealism is clearly different to mine." Fichte's commentary "While Reading Schelling's 'Transcendental Idealism'" was first published in German by Immanuel Hermann Fichte in his 1835 edition of Fichte's works.

Preparatory Work Contra Schelling

Fichte's brief text entitled "Preparatory Work Contra Schelling" was presumably written shortly after receiving a copy of Schelling's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* in May 1801. In it, Fichte comments on the first two paragraphs and the introduction of Schelling's new *Presentation*. If Fichte had disagreed with Schelling's conception of self-consciousness as a kind of being in his *System of Transcendental Idealism*, in the following reflections Fichte now takes issue with Schelling's view of intellectual intuition. For Fichte, Schelling had failed to grasp the objective aspect of intellectual intuition, and only views it as a mode of insight akin to perception [*Wahrnehmung*]. This confusion between perception and the genuine "in-sight" of intellectual intuition led Fichte to conclude with a summary of Schelling's stance with the throwaway line: "*Polyphemus without an eye*."

On the Presentation of Schelling's System of Identity

Fichte continued his reflections on Schelling's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* in a much longer twenty-page commentary that examined its first fifty-one propositions. Fichte headed his commentary: "On the Presentation of Schelling's System of Identity," and it was first published after his death by Immanuel Hermann Fichte in 1835 in Volume 3 of Fichte's posthumous writings (= SW XI: 371–389). This Fichtean commentary, along with the other two shorter ones, are here translated into English for the first time.

Schelling's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* appeared in the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* in May 1801, and he sent a copy of it to Fichte along with an accompanying letter dated May 15, 1801. Fichte seems to have been written his commentary soon after the reception of the work. In his letter Schelling apologized for not writing sooner due to bouts of illness and overwork. He also requested Fichte to view his *Presentation* as another example of their agreement in philosophical matters, despite his attempt to "extend" and broaden the principles of transcendental philosophy. Excited by the publication of Fichte's *Antwortschreiben an Reinhold*, a little over one week later Schelling posted another letter to Fichte, dated May 24, 1801, before the latter had even answered the letter of May 15. Seeing a harmony in their conceptions of absolute knowledge (*absolute Erkenntnis*), Schelling pressed Fichte for some feedback on "the type and form of my *Presentation*," which perhaps provided the initial stimulus for Fichte to write his longer commentary.

Fichte finally answered Schelling in a long eight-page letter that was begun on May 31 but only completed and sent August 7, 1801. Fichte set about listing a number of reservations he had with Schelling's *Presentation* and

the latter's approach in general, dismissing its pretension to scientific certitude, and the lack of self-evidence in its first principle. It is clear from this letter that Fichte had already begun to study Schelling's text, and indeed as the commentary amply demonstrates, the *Presentation* remained one of the few major texts of Schelling that Fichte analyzed at any length. Fichte was no doubt intrigued and surprised by Schelling's own choice of a "geometrical" presentation based on Spinoza's *Ethics*, and in his commentary he even goes to the trouble of comparing Schelling's *Presentation* with the original Latin text of Spinoza's work.

Fichte did not send his commentary to Schelling, yet it is clear that many of the criticisms voiced in his letters were drawn from or found their echo in this study. Apart from the apparent lack of self-evidence in Schelling's first principle, Fichte's chief criticisms in the commentary relate to the supposedly rigid and "external" nature of the *Presentation*. In Fichte's eyes, Schelling's so-called geometric proofs are strictly "formal" and "closed" and therefore prohibit a genuine transition to the rest of the system. Fichte particularly disagrees here with the Schellingian conception of the Absolute. Because of a perceived incorrect deduction, Fichte is not sure if Schelling actually posits *two* Absolutes that are "effecting and effected." He argues that the Absolute needs to be viewed precisely in the opposite manner, for it contains no duplicity or double-state, and all these distinctions only subsequently arise through analytic thinking.

However, Fichte does make a number of positive criticisms, insofar as he agrees with Schelling's attempt to derive the finite from the eternal, because "precisely this derivation is the task of philosophy." Fichte closes his commentary with the sentiment that the entire difference between Schelling and him can be traced back to these "couple of points of separation."

J. G. Fichte

*Announcement*¹⁴

For six years now the *Wissenschaftslehre* has been available to the German public.¹⁵ Different people have received it in vastly different ways—the majority have been vehement and passionate opponents, a number of unqualified people have showered it with praise, and there have been a few gifted adherents and collaborators.—.

For five years a new presentation of the *Wissenschaftslehre* has been sitting in my drawer, and I have regularly used it as a basis for my lectures on this science.¹⁶ This winter I am busily revising this new presentation and hope it will be published in the coming spring.¹⁷

My sincere wish is that the public *provisionally*, i.e., until they are in the position of convincing themselves—accept the following two assurances from me and keep them in mind while reading this new presentation. The first assurance: apart from a few individuals (and my immediate listeners, to whom this does not apply), virtually *nothing* is known of the *Wissenschaftslehre* among the learned public. The second: this science is a *newly discovered* science whose very idea did not previously exist, and which can only be obtained and judged from the *Wissenschaftslehre* itself.

Concerning the first point: as far as I can tell, the *Foundations of the Wissenschaftslehre* (which appeared six years ago as a handout for my listeners), has scarcely been understood and has not been used by anyone except my immediate listeners.¹⁸ It seems to require oral explanations to make it accessible. I believe I have been more successful with my *Natural Right*¹⁹ and *System of Ethics*,²⁰ and have more clearly presented my ideas on philosophy as a whole. After hearing all the diverse opinions about and since the publication of these books, it appears that the public has not advanced very far in understanding their main points. Perhaps this is because people have customarily *skipped* the introductions and first sections of these works, or perhaps it is not really possible to furnish self-evidence for the remote conclusions of my system without their initial premises (for which one can quite easily provide premises). Only *the two introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre, and the first chapter of a new presentation*

of this system that were published in the *Philosophisches Journal*, seem to have been better understood, and aroused more favourable expectations about the *Wissenschaftslehre* in a number of open-minded people.²¹ Nevertheless, these essays can only give at most a provisional idea of my undertaking, for this undertaking is not actually implemented and carried out in these texts.

I will not discuss here the extent to which my talented collaborator, Professor Schelling, has been more successful at paving the way for the transcendental standpoint in his natural scientific writings²² and in his recently published *System of Transcendental Idealism*.²³

In another context,²⁴ I once declared that I would hold myself responsible for this almost universal past misunderstanding, if it would encourage the public to undertake a reappraisal of this issue. After long practice with the most diverse individuals, the author of this science now believes he has finally acquired the skill to communicate it to others in the form of a completely new system, one that has not been found by elaborating any previously existing version of this science, but one discovered in an entirely different manner.

Hence, in order to facilitate a more successful study of the announced presentation, it is my hope that while reading this new presentation people will naturally not only put to one side any *philosophical concepts they may have acquired from other systems, but also any ideas they might have acquired from my previous writings on the Wissenschaftslehre*, to provisionally treat these writings as though they did not exist, and to accept an invitation to a completely new and open inquiry. *Provisionally*, I said, i.e., until one is able to assimilate these concepts in a more lucid and justifiable manner, and therefore view these writings in a fresh and more useful light.

However, no one should believe that the fears repeatedly voiced by certain cautious people who willingly refrain from occupying themselves with thinking have now been realized—that after having tormented the public to undertake a strenuous study of an abstract theory I might sooner or later recant this theory, and then all the applied effort would have been in vain.—

We can only take back an *opinion*; what we have truly *known*, can never be taken away. What we *can know* remains absolutely and eternally certain; this certainty will remain with the person who has experienced it as long as he himself remains. If I have really generated knowledge in myself through the discovery of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, as I certainly claim, then though it may be possible to more clearly present it to *others* (but not to *me*), it can never be taken away. Thus, if any of my writings has succeeded in generating knowledge in one of my readers, then it can never be taken away from him, even if through illness or old age I myself were to become mentally incapacitated and cease to understand my own writings, or were no longer to see what I now clearly see, and in this misunderstanding reject them.

This brings me to the second point. The *Wissenschaftslehre*, I said, is a completely new science. Nothing similar to it has ever existed before. Kant raised philosophy to a height it had never attained before, but it is equally true that the Kantian school has not progressed beyond Kant himself.²⁵—

Up to the time of Kant philosophy was considered to be rational cognition from *concepts*. It was contrasted with mathematics, because the latter is supposed to be rational cognition from *intuitions*.²⁶

This view of philosophy neglects a number of issues.

First of all, if rational cognition *based on intuitions* really exists (as one asserts of mathematics), there must be in turn some kind of *cognition of this cognition*, as long as this cognition does not spell the end of all cognition and thinking; indeed, as long as it is also possible to even assert *that* such a mode of cognition exists. And since an intuition as such can only be intuited, there must be cognition *based on intuition*. However, where is this *mathesis of mathesis* realized?²⁷

My reply to these people therefore is—you want to generate *rational cognition based on concepts* (like in mathematics, this obviously refers to a mode of cognition *through* reason that is *cognizing*, and indeed, in pure reason, which does not contain any perception). You obviously *have* these concepts prior to the cognition that you want to generate from them, because you analyze and dissect what is combined in them. I clearly see here how you correctly rediscover in these concepts what was already contained in them, and how by developing them you are able to make your cognition *clearer*. What I completely fail to see, however, is how through this business you can *extend*, *criticize*, and *justify* your cognition, or if it is incorrect, how you can *correct* it.

You possess the concept, and the development of your cognition based on the concept presupposes it. But how did you arrive at this concept in the first place? *What* exactly did you grasp in it; and how did you possess and grasp it *before and while* you were engaged in comprehending it? Hence, for the concepts that your science presupposes and are its ultimate to even be possible at all, you have to assume something that is higher than all concepts.

On the other hand, because the nature of reason itself already assures that you will undoubtedly fail to comprehend and supply us with concepts of what is incomprehensible, that is: of anything not lying in this higher something and which contains the stuff of all concepts, we certainly do not fear anything like this from you. However, since you intend establishing a necessary and universally valid science you will obviously proceed from concepts whose necessity is *conceptually* asserted. That is to say, you maintain that the concepts have a manifold composed with absolute necessity and which are indivisible from one another. How and in what manner do you envisage proving the necessary ground of this composing? This ground is patently not in the act of

composing itself, since then it would be its own ground, and hence would be free and not necessary; but is the ground in something external to the composing? Consequently, you would be always driven beyond the concept itself.

Ever since there has been talk of a critique of reason and of a cognition of reason as something *known*, the task of reason has primarily been to cognize *itself*, and to ascertain from this how it is possible for reason to cognize something external to itself. From this it should have been obvious that reason can only comprehend and grasp itself in its own immediate *intuition*, and not in anything derived or that does not have its ground in itself, which is the case for the concept. Therefore: if philosophy is henceforth to solely signify *the cognition of reason itself by means of itself*, then philosophy can never be cognition based on concepts, but cognition based on intuition.

Because mathematics indeed exists for us, it should have been abundantly clear that the ground of immediate self-evidence, necessity and universal validity is never present in the concept but lies in the intuition of comprehending itself. Of course, such an intuition is never necessary or contingent or tells us that something exists, but it simply absolutely is, and is what it is. It is universally valid not just because it remains eternally one and the same, but because it communicates its invariability to every concept that grasps it; i.e., precisely because and *to the extent* that the concept grasps *it*. One should have gathered from this that everything genuinely self-evident and universally valid in the pre-Kantian philosophies and in the Kantian philosophy itself (even though these philosophies may not have clearly realized this), does not have its ground in the concept but only in the intuition.

In our time it has proved clear to everyone that language is no longer sufficient for reaching agreement on philosophical concepts, and it has even been ironically suggested—which Herder²⁸ and his spiritual ally Jean Paul²⁹ ended up taking seriously³⁰—to *preface the critique of reason* with a *meta-critique of language*,³¹ *I said “preface”!* And since in life we obviously arrive at really understanding one another, there must be a higher means of unification than the *concept*, and its frequently falsified second-hand impression: *the word*, which would allow us to explain both the agreement and constant divisions in philosophy. Intuition might well be this higher means of unification, which would be the tribunal for both the concept itself and its representative, the word. It is now apparent that philosophical language does not require any meta-critique, any more than the expressions “mathematical point,” “line,” etc. require one.

Thus, philosophy would be cognition of reason itself through itself—based on intuition. The first aspect is Kant’s important discovery, but which he did not carry out; the second aspect has been furnished by the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and is the condition for the possibility of carrying it out: and as a consequence, it is a completely new science.

Now one should not indiscriminately and immediately reject this idea just because one hears the words “*Wissenschaftslehre*,” “intuition,” and “intellectual

intuition" (for the *Wissenschaftslehre* does indeed proceed from these) in Kant's sense. For he has recently declared both people and their expressions to be unjustified, no matter how they are formulated: "The *Wissenschaftslehre* is—*pure logic*; since it is futile to try and obtain a real object from it."³² "Intellectual intuition would be—a *non-sensible intuition of something that subsists in repose*, which is absurd."³³—

The *Wissenschaftslehre* is not at all logic to me; I would even banish pure logic entirely from the sphere of philosophy. To me intellectual intuition is not an intuition of something already subsisting. An intellectual intuition cannot be conceptually explained, precisely because it lies higher than all concepts; one learns to know it only when one has it. Anyone who does not know it will have to wait for our presentation. In the meantime, let him picture in his consciousness the *drawing* of a line (not the *drawn* line), which hopefully too is not something subsisting. The *Wissenschaftslehre* is *mathesis*, not merely with regard to its *external* form, but also with regard to its *content*. It describes a continuous series of intuitions; and proves all of its propositions in intuition. It is the *mathesis* of reason itself. Just as, for instance, geometry includes the entire system of the limiting of space, so the *Wissenschaftslehre* includes the entire system of reason. With regard to its material content, mathematics is the only completely scientific undertaking that exists.—

Hence, I wish that people had some knowledge of mathematics before embarking on a study of the *Wissenschaftslehre*; i.e., not without first obtaining a clear insight into the ground of the *immediate self-evidence* and *universal validity* of mathematical *postulates* and theorems. Whoever sees why, for example, the proposition: there is only one straight line possible between two points—includes within a single case the infinity of all possible cases, and pictures to himself the origin of the immediate certainty—he will never encounter a case that contradicts it, as long as reason remains reason. I can promise in good faith that this person will understand the *Wissenschaftslehre* in its new presentation as easily as he understands geometry. However, if anyone fails to see this—I have every reason to believe that many people lack the above mentioned sense for self-evidence and universal validity, and do not contradict geometry only because it is already *established* as a self-evident science—I would dissuade these people from studying the *Wissenschaftslehre*.— For it lies in a world that simply does not exist for them.

Because the *Wissenschaftslehre* is mathematics, it also has the distinctions of mathematics.

To begin with, it has the same *immediate self-evidence*.³⁴ There is no hesitating, vacillating and weighing up, whether one fully admits this assertion or not. Whoever does not hit upon the right point, completely fails to understand the *Wissenschaftslehre*; whoever finds it, is surprised by its immediate clarity and necessity; he *cannot* see it in any other way than *like this*.

—[The *Wissenschaftslehre* has] the same thoroughgoing *determinacy*³⁵ [as mathematics]. It does not matter what sign the *Wissenschaftslehre* attaches to its

object, whether it terms it “I” or “Not-I,” X or Y—the sign itself is nothing; we are only speaking about what occurs within the immediate intuition of every person. This cannot sway and slip in our hands like the faltering grip of a faltering language, where someone in their fantasy associates more to it and someone else less, developing the same subject first in a more precise and then in a less precise manner. But it is same for all reason³⁶ and remains invariably the same for every rational being, as long as he remains rational.—

[They possess] the same *irrefutability*.³⁷ One cannot at all dispute about and against the *Wissenschaftslehre*. Either one sees its proposition and immediately admits it, or one does not see it; in the latter case, it is not at all present for one. And if we still contradict it, then we are not contradicting what the *Wissenschaftslehre* states, but what we ourselves have invented.—

In what manner and from what premises could we argue against this science? Could one, as has been tried so far, [argue against it] using *concepts* and *propositions* developed from concepts? According to the rules of disputing, however, the opponent also has to accept whatever has been inferred against him. Yet the *Wissenschaftslehre* absolutely and without exception does not admit the validity of any concept that has not been produced within its boundaries from intuition; and none of its concepts is more valid for it than what is within intuition.—

Or does one want to deny intuition to the *Wissenschaftslehre* and everything contained in intuition? In this case one would be merely *denying* the *Wissenschaftslehre* but not *refuting* it. Anyone denying the geometer’s [claim] that there is only one straight line possible between two points obviously cannot be convinced, and has suspended the possibility of all geometry. But I imagine that anyone with a healthy mind would leave this person to himself.

However, philosophy still does not have the same authority as geometry. —

I wonder whether precisely the same objections were raised against mathematics when it was first treated scientifically as are now being raised against philosophy, and whether the non-thinkers of our time do not raise the same objections against mathematics simply on account of its authority?³⁸ But things like this are not allowed to stand in philosophy, similar to the assertion in the domain of the geometer: there are infinitely many different straight lines possible between two points. On the other hand, philosophy has an alternative that the mathematician does not have *within* his domain, but is used by philosophy on the whole: anyone who contradicts philosophy can be driven from his assertion back to another assertion that he himself does not understand, and where he cannot pronounce a single comprehensible word about the explanation. In this way he and everyone else will realize that his understanding and reason actually proceed from an absolute non-understanding and non-reason.

I guarantee that this new presentation will be intelligible to anyone able to understand science. Its goal is to encourage the philosophical public to finally *take the Wissenschaftslehre seriously*. With only a couple of exceptions, since Kant some of the more outstanding minds in this domain have continued to speak past each other. Thus, instead of a scientific discussion, the participants have engaged in a loud and confused shouting match. There have been a number of notable independent thinkers, but we seem to have entirely lost the art of understanding other people. Thus, in the best interests of science it is time to strike out another path.

Despite my own inner convictions concerning the self-evidence and irrefutability of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, I still owe it to *others*—in recognition of the independence of *their* reason, and the examination that every person is only able to make for himself—to make the assumption that I could indeed be in error; but *provisionally*, i.e., until one is able to study the *Wissenschaftslehre* himself. At the beginning of his lesson the mathematician must make a similar assumption when he attempts to lay his science before his student. I hereby expressly make this assumption: *on the other hand, and it is my perfect right to do this, I also demand the opposite assumption of every rational being, that they provisionally (i.e., up until they can refute me) assume that I also could be right.*

Promises of the kind above, which spring from thoughtful considerations familiar to anyone who knows anything about science, have been made for all the world to hear. Furthermore, as we have frequently seen, a philosophy of this kind promises to help clarify and elucidate all the other sciences. It would therefore be unforgivable for someone to continue speaking without bothering to listen to what has been said, or even—as has so far occurred—to immediately heap abuse and ridicule on the speaker.

Therefore, one should continue reading until one has actually understood, and as a consequence, either accept or refute it if one is able. Or if one is not willing to do this, then one should keep quiet about all philosophical matters. This is the only rational thing to do in such circumstances. For heaven's sake, it is finally time to become serious about the revolution in philosophy that has been so haphazardly spoken about for the last decade. Anyone wishing to remain back may do so, but they ought to be aware that they are remaining back and keep silent, so as not to cause those wishing to progress to fall into error.

I do not want to talk about or even acknowledge the list of philosophical errors that has been leveled against the *Wissenschaftslehre* since it appeared. The past is the past. However, after the publication of the new presentation, which I legitimately believe everyone will be capable of understanding, and to whose principles I will be able to refer, I intend to observe the progress of philosophy in my own periodical.

Any offense that this Announcement and its tone may cause will disappear once the announced presentation has been understood. Even this tone stems from the subject matter and can only be judged from it.

The reproach of arrogance that has so often been brought against me and the other defenders of the *Wissenschaftslehre* precisely overlooks the worst aspect of our presumption; that we in all seriousness claim to possess and teach science—I said: *science*. Those people relating their *opinions* to each other have to be mutually tolerant and polite, and humbly admit that the opinion of someone else might have the same value as their own opinion. For them, it is a question of: live and let live, imagine and let imagine. They have to be outwardly modest, because inwardly they are thoroughly arrogant: because it is the most outrageous arrogance to believe that it is up to the other person to know what *we* mean. However, I have never understood why *science*—which is never the affair of individuals but the property of the entire kingdom of reason—ought to be humble toward ignorance. Hence, everything depends on whether we are correct in our assumption that we are in possession of science. Settling this question will also settle the question of our arrogance.

The enthusiasm of these so-called “many-philosophers” against a “sole-philosopher” is strange.³⁹ I can only understand it if I say that one is either a *sole-philosopher* or *not a philosopher at all*; and until the latter has been proved we will continue to count ourselves among the former.

Finally: I hope to make this new presentation so clear and comprehensible that no further help or even clearer presentation will be required. As for scientific elegance, the rigorous and systematic arrangement of the parts (with the exclusion of everything extraneous), and the determination of the terminology using linguistic signs, as well as a symbolic system of pure concepts (which was already sought by Leibniz with his universal characteristic,⁴⁰ but is only possible since the *Wissenschaftslehre*), I will deal with these after it has been proved that the age has found the forthcoming presentation to be useful and is open to a purely scientific presentation.

Berlin, November 4, 1800.

Fichte.

J. G. Fichte

New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre (1800) [Extract]⁴¹

Concerning the New Version of the *Wissenschaftslehre*

1). Without order and paragraphs in the §§ or in the chapters: and the principles of this critical examination.

2). Preliminary considerations on the type of proof.

Ad. 1. The principle is presumably that all *extraneous* matter will be separated.— All the different reflections separated by §§. Here I have to make sure that I pay close attention, so that everything will occur in this manner.

Ad. 2. It might be especially worth pointing out that *we never enter into real consciousness*, but philosophically always hover at a higher potency. “Think of the *I*”: this is an act that also frequently occurs: the actual consequence of consciousness has taken place, but not the “*thinking of the I*”: This is an *objective* [consciousness]. Our *beholding*⁴² and *observing*⁴³ of this act is precisely the point.

§ 1. In fact, the goal is still only to prove that intellectual intuition is the condition of every possible consciousness. You will now have to see what the principal content of the following §§ is, and to what extent the (discovered) constituents serve as a preparation for it.

§ 2. *Determinacy*⁴⁴, *determinability*⁴⁵ / is above all necessary here.

§ 3. The *activity* is the true object of intellectual intuition, proven / <real>; the accomplishment and execution.— Hence § 2. is in any case necessary for clarity.— I have to think along the lines of a thoroughly determined foundational thread, and in this way set down <an application.>

Preliminary consideration. Concerning our *actual* task. *vid. supra.*⁴⁶ *Arbitrariness* of the connection (Formerly, A = A provided an occasion for dogmatism.⁴⁷ I will now set to work far more idealistically.)

<Preliminary arrangement > . . . the arbitrary and preparatory task.

To think of oneself.

Whoever has *thought* of himself has found that the essential task of his immediate consciousness is to become conscious of this thinking.

Historical Narrative*

Namely, the constructing of the concept of the I is intuited as a *reverting of thought* back into itself; in contrast, [the constructing] of every Not-I is a movement of thought out of itself; the former is a thinking about thinking itself, the latter is a thinking about non-thinking.⁴⁸ The first is merely reflected in itself, the second is what is jointly received.

Hence, both as a cognitive act and as a grasping of the *I*, thinking testifies to thought reverting back into itself.

Let us comprehend here a second postulate that is equally an immediate postulate.

To become conscious of one's activity in thought requires paying complete, precise and vivid attention to one's thinking, an inward intuiting; it is a kind of *agility*, like rousing oneself from rest, like bearing oneself in a certain direction: and now the indicated concept also has to be determined according to the direction of the activity of thought.

* [*Written above this:*] The juridical state constitutes a closed group of people, who are united under the same laws and the same supreme right. This group of people should be restricted to mutual trade and industry among themselves, and every foreigner ought to be excluded from participation in this trade, and then it will exactly form a closed commercial state, just as it now constitutes a closed juridical state.⁴⁹

New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre

Preliminary Remarks

Because there are no shortage of introductions to the *Wissenschaftslehre*,⁵⁰ and because in conjunction with this text a work written in the same spirit and at the same time has just been published under the title: *Crystal Clear Report*,⁵¹ I do not wish to repeat what has already been said there. Nevertheless, I feel obliged to make a couple of remarks, since misunderstandings might ensue if they were omitted, and which will make everything infinitely easier if they are understood.

1) The reader will not be informed about anything positive, nothing at all like a study; again, no *result* is assumed, nor the history of any foreign idea. We have become so accustomed to the psychological point of view that it is almost impossible to get beyond it. Thus, this text has nothing at all to do with psychology.

Henceforth, the reader can and must forget everything he knows, and retain nothing except what he finds here.— Of course, these findings must not contradict what the reader *genuinely knows and possesses*: we are of the opinion that if the reader were to find a contradiction of this kind it would simply prove that he has not correctly understood us.— Naturally, he will have to *wait* until he also obtains whatever is in his heart and whatever he is seeking. He certainly needs to be patient. We are acutely aware that the reader himself has to *enter into* our words, and perhaps even suspects us of a sleight of hand. Our words are not to mean anything else than what we say: and if we are right, our words could not mean anything else. (In any event, we will clearly indicate every step to the reader before passing on to the next one.)

We will start from postulates. Hence, the reader should even forget the *author* and this book; he should not allow a foreign train of thought to unfold before his eyes, but should develop instead his own train of thought.

2). Our system does not appeal to any prior fact, but necessarily derives all the facts of consciousness: as though we did not have any [prior] idea of them.

In any case, it examines what is achieved through the *free production*—not the *discovery*—of a determination in our consciousness, and the entire force of its proof is based on this inner intuition (though not in the development of concepts, which only arise and are precisely grasped through intuition, and whose correctness first has to be examined through intuition, before the slightest thing can be proved through an analysis of them). The necessity and the universal validity of every rational consciousness that is to be found in this intuition, is based partly on immediate consciousness, partly on the insight into the necessary subordination of everything that was subordinated under the condition found in the intuition.

Nevertheless, in the course of our science this point will be clarified using examples and by means of the entire method itself.

3) In this way the reader should absolutely forget any possible purpose in this train of thought: He [should] consider it to be an invitation to free thinking: this is supposed to signify nothing else than that the thoughts are developed in this manner. It will be ultimately shown how useful and necessary this is.

4) The reader should consider himself invited to thoroughly *free* thinking. In life, everything he produces in himself is not genuine thinking, sensing, perceiving, willing etc.; for here he lives and continues his path without making any effort toward freedom or any effort to philosophize.

The thoughts he is able to generate in the course of our philosophizing, however, and which become an element on his life's philosophical path during the development of this system, these kinds of thoughts are generated out of him, and never stem from real *finished* life but from transcendental-philosophical

life. In this kind of life, we provisionally postulate (anyone who understands us will realize that this is the case) our philosophy to be an appropriate illustration⁵² of real life, and it has the latter as its object. That is to say, the reality of life occurs here in a *thoroughly* appropriate image, not in accordance with its matter but accordance with its form.

This misunderstanding has engendered the charge that philosophy in the end is *only* philosophy—merely a science of the thing—of a vital life—but not the thing itself: and that we cannot know and philosophize well, but only live.

This is self-explanatory, and all of these charges are trivial.

Chapter One

Omnipresent and pure invariable self-consciousness is a self-determining.

I.— Postulate.

On immediate self-consciousness, as the necessary condition of every other consciousness.

Wait, that can't be right: the above immediate consciousness is not raised into consciousness and cannot exist at all. It ceases to be what it is as soon as we reflect on it, and floats off into a higher region.

Accordingly, what kind of proposition is the above proposition? It is not really a *postulate*.⁵³ Yet it is just as little a *theorem*,⁵⁴ i.e., a demonstration using concepts.— The procedure is entirely like in *mathematics*. It is proved in intuition: I can't do anything else. Mathematical demonstrations are likewise only signposts⁵⁵ [leading] to intuition. Hence, it is surely a *proposition*.⁵⁶ But not from concepts. Thus, I had better retain *theorem*.

1). Theorem. Every other consciousness* presupposes immediate self-consciousness as a condition of possibility.

* of *thinking*? or of all thinking? can only be decided after the conclusion of the §.

a). Mediating postulate: *To think of oneself*. (Corollary: as an auxiliary line,⁵⁷ as it were.)

Here one typically thinks *more* than this. Don't do anything of the sort. Therefore one ought to think in harmony *with* it. We now seek the aforementioned [element] through abstraction; which here is actually a *construction*; we distinguish and leave everything else alone.

Hence, in our arbitrary thinking "I" signifies *nothing more* than what is going to be established in a moment. In the *language of everyday life* it is not a question of the meaning of this word, because we could replace it with any other word ("A" for example); our intention here is not to define words or to compile a dictionary (which some people view as a philosophical system).

The main point is that *this* is *truly and genuinely* thought by everyone who *accompanies us* in thought: this is needed in order to forge a rapport between us—otherwise it would be an utterly *empty* study for the reader—one has to put aside (forget) everything else that is likewise self-evident; otherwise our inferences and assertions would not be appropriate.

Thus—

“I” does not mean and should not mean anything else than what we will now establish and which arises through the postulated thought. It is assumed that *this* has really come into being: if anything else has arisen in addition to this then it should be put aside.

α.) Completely think the concept as the product of your thought, setting it in opposition to every other thought: that of the wall [for example] or something similar; then you will find that what is thought in the latter, the wall, is not the thinking agent, but is supposed to be in opposition to it; in the former, however, the thought and the thinker should be the same. I, the thinker, am also the thought. Hence, in it, the concept as the product of a thought—expresses the identity of the thinker and what is thought—everyone will hopefully discover that this is the case: and nothing further is assigned to it: however, anything else that it contains should be positively dismissed.

ß). According to a second postulate (here it is simply a mediating one):—to become conscious of one’s *activity* in thought—means that the thinking of oneself is to be characterized by this act in oneself: or the direction of the activity. *To go out of oneself*.⁵⁸

Namely—once again one pays precise, lucid, vivid attention to one’s state of mind in the specific moment at which one is requested to do so—to *think of oneself*, and as a consequence of this summons, to be *thought*. In this connection, one’s thinking is glimpsed as an *agility*, so to speak, as a breaking free of the state of inertia [; as an act] of lucid thinking, and a movement in a certain direction. In [the act of] thinking oneself, what then would this direction be, compared to [the act of] not thinking oneself? Clearly—everyone is capable of finding this intuition of the self—it is a reverting of thinking back into itself. In contrast, [going out of oneself] in thought, estranging oneself, and losing oneself in the object (and which because of this becomes an object)—[the former] is a self-positing of thought—the latter is a positing of non-thinking, and a forgetting of thinking.—The first is a reflecting of thought—the second is a derivation—centripetal, centrifugal.

Result: the concept of the I—or A.x.y.z., or whatever you want to call it = the identity of the thinker and the thought. Thinking the I = reflection of thinking itself: and *inversely*, the identity of thinker and thought: etc.

The inversion states:

1). this same procedure produces something identical to what was proven in intuition.

2). Nothing else ought to be brought into existence through the arbitrary sign "I" except the product of this procedure.

(*ad.* 2. How can the proof be generalized through the intuition? Answer: They are thoroughly *identical* propositions. There is still no *synthesis*. In the designated act the predicate is only expressed in the I in a *different* manner: as soon as this expression signifies something else, it becomes sleight of hand, and the propositions become false.)

What would be the pure result of this intuition? Answer: *My thinking can revert back into itself.*— Nothing more. This alone is the factual content.*
II.

3rd Postulate: to again become conscious of the thinking (and the type of thinking) that has been carried out in one's consciousness.

[*] 1). Corollary. Immediate self-consciousness is always what is invariable and *subjective*: and because it is isolated it can never become the *object* of consciousness. This is also not the case for us.

Hence, what is now to be done? We *infer* it as a constituent and condition of another consciousness, and then abstractly describe it.

2). Corollary. It is entirely like a mathematical proof. The *principium a quo* is the intuition.— Whoever cannot *generate* this intuition in themselves, or cannot find it within themselves (which should be considered impossible)—for them it lacks the force of proof.

It is completely false to say that philosophy is rational knowledge based on concepts.⁵⁹ The concept is never an archetype,⁶⁰ nor any kind of *thing*, but only a reproduction.⁶¹ The intuition is the archetype. The concept (and precisely because of this, the *word*, its reproduction) actually has to render account to the intuition.— Precisely what is composed together in the concept, is indivisibly co-existent in the intuition.— A philosophical concept can only *clarify* and render *consistent* an already *completed* system: however, it can never rectify its fundamental errors: for it never arrives at the ground.

3) The concepts contained in the theorem, as well as what is posited on the path of demonstration, are assumed to be *approximately* known as posited from the ordinary use of the intellect. In any case, they are to be further determined through their use and proof.

The A = A of the *Foundations [of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre]*⁶²: the former is a judgment that is related to an initial positing: the latter is the *original introspection back into oneself*.⁶³ Reflection on oneself, as the condition for all reflection on A.— This is very clear—I do not believe that the current presentation is more lucid [than the earlier 1794 presentation]. And yet, how few people understood these earlier indications!! I didn't know at the time that I was dealing with such a thoroughly un-philosophical and dogmatic age.

According to the above presupposition, when we—the author and the reader—interacted in the same manner with one another about our thinking of the I and the Not-I, we were doubtlessly conscious of this, and indeed clearly and vividly, and examined and observed it from all sides.

However, in this state we were unaware of our consciousness, for this was precisely our consciousness at that time. So now we have *deduced* the necessity of this type of consciousness, because we could not have reflected *on* our thinking without it: and have established and made a number of miscellaneous remarks about it.

Now, we attend to this: *that* we have reflected above, what we could not again reflect there, but absolutely *acted*. And the awareness of the initial consciousness of our thinking arises in us precisely in and through this reflection. What we presupposed has transpired: but especially apart from the manner.

Deliberations on the path ahead.

1. Specifically now a thoroughly rigorous proof and method of proof.
2. Cognitive necessity: a [mode of] *thinking*, without a consciousness of thinking this *thought*, or announcing it in us, as an utter absurdity. (Thought should not be *conceived* as anything else than a kind of consciousness).

a) What kind of proof is this?— An experiment of a thoroughly *necessary* thought. Immediate consciousness of a *synthesis* in thought: of an original synthesis.— The *universality* only follows from the immediate necessity. (This all belongs in a corollary).

Is this now a stringent proof: or do I have other ones? Is there one here based on *intuition*? The above [proof] is ultimately one from *intuition*. Since an immediate consciousness of the indivisibility of thought and the consciousness (of this thought) is none other than an intuition. (This too in the corollary).

Hence, a further 4th postulate: To see whether we could also conceive of a mode of thinking without a consciousness of thinking (a conscious-less thinking, which is still a kind of thinking).

(However, aren't these *conscious-less representations* opposed to me?— They aren't actually *representations*,⁶⁴ but are something utterly absurd—however, I still have to *evade* them / and so I arrive precisely at the above universally established proposition. I posit the following: a mode of thinking that genuinely generates a consciousness of what is *thought*, is inconceivable without precisely a consciousness of thinking. Hence, one does not admit the proposition; it too has an incorrect aspect.[]]

- 1). A mode of thinking with a consciousness of what is thought—without consciousness—can be an *identical* proposition. *Yet it should not be an identical proposition, but a synthetic one instead.*

The main point is the way in which it becomes systematic: an indicator, a strict *proof*, where one cannot get beyond the immediate consciousness: it is *absolute*. It is presupposed by everything that is to be explained, not as a

product of something; it [should] not presuppose or *overlook* this—which would signify the complete abolishment of any use of the understanding—so that transcendental idealism stands there ready-made. This *immediate* intuition, as the absolute *boundary* within which all our common or philosophical thinking has to necessarily move.

This immediate consciousness is the *highest* absolute, and includes everything else.— (Against Schelling's idea of a separate philosophy of nature).⁶⁵

To look into oneself—a). in any event this subjective consciousness is already amply characterized in the preceding; and we are solely speaking of this.

In short, something is missing here that I can't put my finger on. a). a special consciousness of thinking is not at all necessary in the consciousness of the conceived: it is never actually present: only in a *free* reflecting on thinking do we have to cognitively add it as the condition of thinking itself. (Only this is asserted here).

A thinking—as genuine consciousness of the conceived—cannot be thought without a consciousness of thinking. The proposition has to be established in this way.

Is it now perfectly clear in this form?— If it isn't immediately clear *in this* form, then it is a proof, it is a surreptitious proof. (The "*I think*" must *be able* to accompany all my representations, said Kant⁶⁶: and in this way he circumvents a number of difficulties.)

I should now first of all make the meaning of my assertions entirely clear by means of the customary distinctions.

1). No special kind of self-consciousness—a consciousness of my *thinking*—actually comes to the fore in everyday thinking (a formative consciousness that loses itself in the object).

2). I can, however, generate a consciousness of my thinking at any moment. (It is something altogether *immediately* possible for me.) (Though, I do not yet arrive at any kind of synthetic assertion through it.)

3). By generating the latter, however, and by attaching it to the former (consciousness of the conceived), I find a). the two are *indivisibly united*. b). the former is *conditioned* by the latter, and not vice versa, in this union.— And when I *reflect on it again*, I am obliged to think this way.*

*But this circle is once again to be noted: an exposition and reexamination of consciousness is precisely a *reexamination*; but nothing is given in itself. Our future syntheses have the same significance: and only in this way do we end up giving them some kind of significance.

[Put] this in a corollary.—in which the *disinterest* with the above would already transform it into a *real interest*.— Relation retained with the common consciousness—here, meanwhile, only for the philosophical judgment of consciousness.

What about this proof? Is it more or less established?— More on this below. / Decision. To first develop the proof in the above manner: then, because of the outline, to relate it to consciousness-less representations.

Assertion: I cannot think any consciousness of what is conceived without a consciousness of thinking.

Thinking, namely, is consciousness—is consciousness of itself—is a self-reverting back into itself.

This is now clear to me: and then again it isn't.— How can we fix this insight so that it can never be distorted?— There is no other way: except by genuinely looking into oneself.

Your thinking, e.g., of the wall, as a consciousness of the wall—you cannot think it in any other way than as the consciousness, the reflection of the wall, as being immanent in thinking itself.

2). Describing this consciousness in accordance with its internal character: *A reverting back* into itself—the act through which the I comes into being in lucid thought.

3). Describing this consciousness in accordance with its relations (immediate, absolute, unconditioned, but conditioning every other consciousness).

Clarifying the concept. Auxiliary line: *conditioned* and *unconditioned*. Signifies a consequence of thinking in a genetic derivation. I can proceed in thinking from A to B but not vice-versa / in the same sense; but certainly in a different sense as well.

Immediate signifies: no special act: or of something, but that it is omnipresent, and therefore indivisibly united.

Conditioned means: thinking or any other specific consciousness is a consciousness, and that its ground is contained in immediate consciousness, but not vice-versa.

It is *absolutely* posited, with such certainty; “positing” some kind of consciousness signifies: it cannot be explained by anything known to us, or be derived from this, or be subsequently added into our thinking by something else, but it is always immediately first. Every other consciousness is only a further determination of this primary consciousness.

It has to be shown that this is the case by means of the immediate intuition that I am using to philosophize.

4) Thus, every possible consciousness presupposes an immediate self-consciousness.

All consciousness, everything that is ever to be there for us, is only a further determination and object of this immediate consciousness. This is the sphere enclosing everything for us; the first thoroughly positive [consciousness]. For us (i.e., anyone saying “I” to themselves) there is or could be no higher [consciousness].

Anyone* who makes the attempt and really conducts the experiment will understand this: we assert that a thinking without a consciousness of thinking is an absolutely unthinkable and utter absurdity.—thinking itself is a mode—is necessarily conceived as a further determination of consciousness itself: and hence a thinking without a consciousness of thinking is an impossible thought.— Whoever is unable to carry out this attempt cannot philosophize with us: whoever conducts it and finds and says that it is different, has to be [some kind of] differently constituted being to us, and cannot enter into any kind of agreement with us.

[**above*:] It is probable that the reader has put more into the given concept than is contained in the task as we have understood it. It is envisioned like this; if the task is neglected, then it contains something thoroughly unexamined.

5). To become conscious of the form in which the consciousness of these immediately determined ideas, if further pushed, must be necessarily thought. To become conscious of this.

To become conscious of the relations in which this consciousness of determined thinking is necessarily conceived.

Ad: 6th: Ordering

Immediate:— antithesis: I first of all had to generate a certain consciousness: and I could do it: Here I cannot think at all that it is first understood through an act, but is immediately and thoroughly indivisible there.

Conditioning, but not conditioned.— Antithesis *vid.* On the back of the page.

What is further determined in all consciousness.— The pure reflection of something that is reflected in a determined manner.

It is absolutely presupposing.— If any kind of consciousness is posited, then *it is posited*, but posited as *conditioning*.

Everything that is for us, is only within the same, its determination and its object, and one can never step out of the same, without forgetting about oneself.

/ This is the immediate *intellectual intuition*; which never again becomes objective; and I therefore become aware of it through something *lower*, thinking.[*]

[*] In the preface. The *Wissenschaftslehre* cannot be contradicted⁶⁷; for [the act of] contradicting itself, of talking, is fundamentally conditioned. Every contradiction shows that one has not understood the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and is not speaking about it.

I am not *praising myself*; for the *Wissenschaftslehre* is not invented through the freedom of any person; no one can claim to have invented it, who does not already possess it.— It belongs to everyone and it cannot come about without a free act—and is possessed by everyone who has become clear about his reason—and *I* did not even first think of it, but Kant.

The *Wissenschaftslehre* is *mathesis* of the mind. In actual mathematics one only examines the *products* of the construction: here one examines the [activity of] constructing itself.

—The conditioned concept signifies a consequence of thinking. If you are unable to determinately construct and limit the thought of some kind of B without thinking of A, and by means of the latter to limit it, but inversely you are able to think of A without B, then B is conditioned by A, but not inversely.

Now make the attempt with the above *self-consciousness* of A.

There is one point here that is unclear, concerning which I will have to write more clearly.—Consciousness as such—determined B—pure self-consciousness.

I only see what has been thought through *thinking*; throughout the form and direction of the thinking. (This is true, but not proven.) *That something of this nature is thought*, is because of a *thinking* of this kind. Thinking depends on itself. Every other kind of thinking is simply sensible: however, if it is thought like this, then a thinking of this kind is thought.

Hence, it is obvious that the consciousness of this determined thinking—conditions the consciousness of what is determinately thought: consequently, the consciousness of thinking in general, the consciousness present in thinking.

If a certain concept B, as a determined concept, cannot be constructed without A being constructed, and B certainly becomes *determined* (explained) through it; however, inversely A can be constructed, without it being B, then one says that B is conditioned by A and A conditions B, but not vice-versa.—This is merely an explanation of the words.

Now with respect to our case, *thinking* appears as an act that is completely dependent on itself alone, i.e., it is unconditioned by anything else. It seems just as possible to think every kind of X as to think X. However, that precisely something of this kind is thought, appears to be thoroughly dependent and conditioned by this kind of thinking. I do not think X (i.e., in the form and direction in which the concept of X arises in me) because X is what is thought. Certainly, however, X is what I have thought, because I absolutely think of X. Thinking is the conditioned of what is thought: and the latter is what is conditioned through the former.

Now if thinking, as it has happened here, is posited as a *consciousness of what is thought*, and the (immediate) consciousness of thinking as such is even reflected on, then these two kinds of consciousness are necessarily related to one another like their objects, and the latter is what conditions the former etc.

Everything [. . .]⁶⁸ (several) [kinds of] consciousness posited as thinking outside of self-consciousness, how it then is, is everything etc. and our above theorem is proved.

1). *Supplements*. 2) Consequences. *Corollaries*. 1).

1). Intuition.

2). pure reflection—i.e., not really of the I as an object or of something: making it into something concrete and independent: (One should absolutely not do this.) The latter is nothing but the person: and everything else is an abstraction.

3). No special consciousness.

1). This immediate consciousness that is subsequently demonstrated should not be thought of as something particular, and as a subsisting consciousness (as some kind of moment of consciousness life filling state), but only as something thoroughly necessary in all its moments, invariable in itself, and entirely the same known first and originally all consciousness—continually, however, with a further determination: here uniting some kind of determined thinking.

Something of this nature is not contained in our proof: it is not contained in our words (this would be surreptitious). It would be better to thoroughly prove below exactly the opposite, and only progress in this way (for if only this could fill our consciousness, then it would be the end of our philosophy).

Of course, we have to partly become aware in general, and partly in every particular moment of life, that a consciousness of this kind is indeed to be accepted and assumed. “The I think that is able to accompany all of my representations.”* However, we never attain it. It always flies off into the highest region.

*This is what Kant says in a rhapsody entitled: Deduction of the Categories, where he carries out everything except a deduction: and where he expressly establishes this “I think” etc. as the supreme centre.⁶⁹

This is his only completely lucid insight. Countless other insights flow from this one, and are to be found in it. If he had only taken hold of these sparks of light, he would have been the creator of a philosophy—and reason could have learned to understand itself in him.

This is what Kant says in a section entitled the Deduction of the Categories, and expressly establishes the “I think” as the principle of a deduction of this kind. Had he really arrived at the announced deduction by means of this lucid insight, and if this inscrutable man had not been immediately seized again by his strange circle, with the result that he ended his impotent endeavor with nothing; then the views of the *Wissenschaftslehre* would have been generated in him, and his philosophy would have had other merits besides this (single) thoroughly splendid insight. On the other hand, he did produce the above thoroughly penetrating insight, and transcendental idealism was (genuinely) invented by him. He therefore remains (something he has said for a long time) the first inventor of transcendental idealism.

2). It is therefore nothing more than what (presupposes all consciousness)—that exists with itself and for itself in consciousness itself—the *pure reflex of consciousness*.

I do not want to say “*reflection*”: for it is not an act, and could not be or appear to be anything else; it is nothing discrete, but wherever consciousness is posited, this same intelligible is omnipresent. The pure reflex, I maintain: is only reflex from something lying below: up to now, from a determinacy of thinking.—Therefore, there is not something from itself that would bring it along with itself,— i.e., a material I. What madness! <and a > terrible misunderstanding.

3). The free self-determining thinking, from all possible consciousness, is restricted to the same to a sphere, and precisely thereby is only a mobile and discrete, variable consciousness—i.e., counter-positing⁷⁰: In contrast to this, the consciousness of the former is every possible consciousness, which indeed must be presupposed for the possibility of thinking, of the selected all-containing—and hence accompanies thinking, and conditions the possibility of the same (the selected) intuition. Hence, according to this terminology, this immediate consciousness (that obviously belongs in the latter sphere), would be called *intuition*.— This also expresses 1). That this— (as with real things) intuition is <a> particular consciousness. 2) it is completely eternal, invariable, permanent—and indeed, is absolute in all thinking: universal intuition.

Inferences

1). All consciousness is a consciousness of our own state. / This belongs in the corollaries.

2). It is threefold. Subject and object: object of the object. / this in more detail.

This is the first supplement.

1). According to this, all consciousness begins with something threefold, and to the extent it is posited in a threefold manner, consciousness itself is posited: self-consciousness as the reflex is doubled: I myself am conscious of thinking. However, this is not thinking; and hence, I am not conscious of any thinking unless it is a determined thinking: this determinacy of thinking is the third aspect. /

Corollary 1.

1). We generate the concept of the I (to whose construction we are summoned) according to the first postulate through precisely this summons, in accordance with a cognitive act, and we are fully aware that we could not have carried it out, because our requirement would either not have been enacted, or we would not have admitted it. In accordance with the 3rd postulate, we precisely seize only a free consciousness of the consciousness of our thinking, if we are fully conscious that it also might not have existed, and that we did not even have it in the foregoing inquiry.

However, thinking without noticing the occurrence of thinking will be discovered to be impossible by anyone who has attempted it: as mentioned above, this consciousness is first generated through a particular act. The connection between this consciousness and thinking is therefore not mediated via a particular act of free reflection; but is absolutely and immediately linked, and necessarily accompanies it.

Perhaps some preliminary remarks.— Actually, these would be better later.

Corollaries.

1). Further instructions about § 1 of the old *Wissenschaftslehre*: from the current one.

2). Theorem, demonstration: this is a sub-demonstration here. We can lift ourselves above everything and bring it down: except above *the latter*. We can only get hold of it from below.

Everything else, though, is facilitated from above by the latter: Hence in our philosophizing I only consider it to be something subjective.*

*Postulate. To draw a line. In the future I'll also gave the name "postulates" to propositions like this: the straight line is the shortest path between two points; (in order to better distinguish the path).

3). It is proven through the necessity of thinking. However, this necessity of thought is intuited, immediately intuited (precisely through the universal intuition). Hence, the latter is needed to find it.

Thinking is a freely generated discursive consciousness; a thoroughly immediate, remaining intuition.

4). We could also call it an abstraction. That is, B is put to one side from the indivisibly united A and B, and the particular is added to A. However, it would not be concretely distinguishable to anyone who does not have the two here. For this reason we have to first assist it through the clear construction to the two. Thus, we cannot start with the command to abstract.

Consequently, here we need to have a genuine synthetic link: this is intuited here. / The world in which we place ourselves simply does not exist for them, and we cannot do anything about this. It is rigorous and convincing for anyone who does not lack it, despite the inadequacy of the universal and necessary intuition.**

** L. Corollaries.

1) Further derivations. A). $A = A$. b) how does the object then come into the I?

2) Self-intuition. Being with oneself.— Hence, transcendental art.

3) Like in the self-intuition, not in general, but specific, now everything further will be proved.

5) Necessity and universality from the intuition. The universality follows from the necessity (absolutely original: everything else is merely derived.) Necessity can only be conceived under the condition of absolute identity, invariability (demonstrated using the example: the straight line is the shortest path between two points). Actually: only one line is possible, it is always the same, it is equal to itself.

6). Transcendental idealism is generated in this way.

The transcendental art consists in—with freedom and consciousness—*of always being with yourself*—or, since the latter actually should not be, and the

whole of real life exactly consists in a non co-consciousness of being with itself—to thoroughly come to oneself when thinking about oneself. (*Awakening* and contemplating oneself—not continuing to *dream*.— *All realism* is a dream of this kind, precisely a not being with oneself: and a dogmatic assertion is only possible in this state. (Since philosophy precisely signifies a thoroughgoing *self-accompanying*, so this now contradicts—philosophy. Every objection just means that one has simply forgotten the above first principle).

1). This means the lucid idea of course that is demonstrated there. Firstly, inward activity, determinacy, determinability, the concept of purpose, and so on.

Consequently, I only need here quiet, determinacy, determinability.

Because self-determination as an immediate object of consciousness. For this, and so on. Non-I, object, being, and so forth, thoroughly find themselves.

2). Should I show in the second chapter that the transition from repose to activity is a special act? Yes.— That is the easy part.— A general remark on the synthesis: simply in order to make something intuitable.

3). Definite activity.— Determinability. Activity, faculty. (Here it might be good to enter into the synthetic series. Activity. Position of a line. Its zero rest.— Faculty—answer, determinacy, determinability, rest and determinability—faculty.— It isn't necessary to stop here, because it is only found through itself.

Chapter Two

We only become conscious of activity as activity insofar as it is transitional and breaks free of inactivity or rest.— This is proven in intuition, and is short and simple.

Corollary 1). On Synthesis.

2). This is thoroughly and solely the result of the mere intuition.

3). On the variety of this proof (from immediate intuition) from the above (from the intuition of thinking).

Is it a theorem? Is it a postulate? What is it?

Does it remain a whole for the sake of the unity: theorem.

§ 2. Second Theorem. We become conscious of our activity as such, only as a transition from the state of non-activity (and through the antithesis of such a state).

Postulate: to become conscious of one's activity as such, and which one separates, in thinking of oneself. As we have already seen above, we intuit this activity as though it were leaping under our eye in continuous movement; it breaks free and moves forward (arising out of nothing) arising from a state of

inactivity, and following from it. It is absolutely necessary to posit this state of inactivity in order to construct the agility and to inwardly intuit it as such. The latter flows continually forth: the former stands still. This flowing forth can only be precisely described by what stands still. Couldn't I make this better?— We have to first of all posit what we continue and set in motion, and the rest is present precisely in this positing.

4th Corollary. The ground of necessity and universality is intuited as present in this mere activity of ours without considering its particular determination.

5th Corollary. Here it exhibits itself as an immediate and first object of immediate self-consciousness: activity.

<*Incertior sum quam antea*> for 1). Is it possible to combine both propositions into a single theorem: no determined activity without a faculty? 2) Shouldn't a sequence, a chain, be discernable in my theorems? The second theorem ought to work: the immediate object of the above self-consciousness is our activity or an act.

Synthetic Theorem 3) there is no consciousness of activity without the positing of a faculty. 4. not without a consciousness of self-determination; this now becomes the actual object of self-consciousness.

What was I thinking when I tried to prove this second theorem, or when I thought I had proved it. It cannot be proved until I arrive at self-determination.

Thus it says; *I am only aware of my self as freely active*.— Hence, all other consciousness presupposes free activity in its consciousness as the condition of its possibility.— I now have to arrive at this proposition by means of intermediate elements.

1). Consciousness of activity as such is only possible as the consciousness of the transition from a state of non-activity, hence, a consciousness of this non-activity.

2). Consciousness of determined activity is only possible as a consciousness of a transition from a state of mere determinability; that is, non-activity; or a faculty.

3). a). Definition: Whatever is thought as a limited portion of a certain sphere is called "determined" [*bestimmt*]. In a certain respect, it is opposed to everything else that is external to it or lies in this sphere.

This is a mere explanation of the words. The thinking just described above—the thinking of something determined—has to be found by everyone in his own intuition, and he procures through this intuition a meaning and insight into the above description.

b). Postulate: To become conscious of the activity when thinking one's self as a determined activity.

We only think of ourselves in this thinking, this thinking simply reverts back into itself; no Not-I is thought.*

*and to this extent the thinking is recognized in its determination, and only in this opposition to another possible thinking.

One is conscious of oneself; that this latter could have also taken place, as that which has really taken place; we could just as well have determined the thought of this antithesis.

We are torn out of a state when we think of the I, and this state is also conceived as a state of indeterminability, and mere determinability; the determinability can only be thought insofar as the latter is thought and in opposition to it.

The fact that there is determinability may be called a “faculty” [*Vermögen*]; and the concept of the faculty is precisely the combination of reposing activity and determinability.

§ 2. Second (mediating) Theorem.

(With this; how can I say it more clearly—it appears that intuition and so on is precisely looked at and formed).

The consciousness of activity as such is the intuition of a transition from the state of inactivity to its opposite state.

(“It is thereby not entirely brought to a clear intuition” What is the actual core?— There also appears to be duplicity here. A flowing and elevating from a state of repose.)

It commences somewhere: and first exists here and becomes activity. The opposite state is in this becoming, and this becoming is a mobile agility that cannot be intuited without its opposite non-being.

Postulate: To intuit the activity in the thinking of oneself.

As anyone will discover who stimulates it in himself, it appears in this intuition as an agility, as a tearing free and mobile force, which starts up from under our eyes and becomes an agility out of nothing. This becoming cannot be intuited without an intuition of the opposite non-being, as activity; and yet for the intuition it is being, i.e., repose, inactivity.

The first is a continual flowing, the second a standing still; the first springs from a fixed place, the second is the firm place of this springing.

Corollary 1. Why I also term this a mediating theorem.

Corollary 2. The self-intuition is now our actual highest subjective intuition—indeed, not a pure intuition, but a determined intuition: not simply fleeting <formal> and abstract, but a lucid, vivid, real and therefore formative consciousness. This formative or constructing is always presupposed and generates the representation: and our propositions only appear true in it. Whoever does not carry this out, does not receive it at all: but remains above these regions of free reflection in a merely fleeting formal consciousness. (This is the actual destiny of most philosophers; they will be liberated from this destiny precisely by the *Wissenschaftslehre*.)

(Dedication to Goethe,⁷¹ to the *creator* and inventor of the German imagination. Also as a designation of the expression of the universal validity of its geometrical propositions.)

Corollary 3. Here all synthesis commences. It arises through forming us to become something adding: and depends on this. Pure creation of intuition as such for oneself for the intuitability. The point from which it can first draw lines. Point-Line*.

* it sees itself, in order to make possible and procure another intuition; here the activity—this is obviously not merely a product of the intuition, but still would like to be something else.

This connection will be important. Name for this sphere. Products of intuition.

Corollary 4. However, one should bear in mind that we are not arguing using concepts and propositions: activity presupposes inactivity—this is more dogmatic, something like a proposition that is determined in itself, and through which the whole nature of transcendentalism would perish.— But [we are arguing] according to the immediate consciousness of this intuition, it would be like this in the intuition: and the proposition should only be valid for this intuition.

Corollary 5. *ut supra*.

Corollary 6. *ut supra*.

§ 3. Third (mediating) Theorem.

Consciousness of activity as something determined is the intuition of a transition from the state of indeterminacy. But it is opposed to determinability.

Demonstration

We call something determined if it is conceived as a limited part of a larger sphere, and in a certain sense it is opposed to everything lying external to it in the same sphere.— This is merely an explanation of the term. Everyone has to prove to himself in intuition the existence of a thinking of this kind, like the above described thinking of something determined and real: and through this intuition he procures meaning and clarity for the above given description.

Demonstration

Postulate: Intuiting the activity in the thinking of oneself as a determined activity.

We are not at all talking about self-determination here, more on this in the following §. We are talking about determinacy.

The above does not work.— Get straight to the point.

Everyone is directly conscious of himself: and instead of thinking of himself, he could have also thought of every thing that he is not, of every possible thing external to himself. Consequently, thinking of oneself is only

one part of the sum total of all possible thinking, i.e., according to the above explanation, it is a determined thinking.

This determinacy is now intuited and constructed, insofar as the indeterminacy arises from it; however, whether the I or a possible Not-I is now conceived in itself, or in mere antitheses to indeterminacy, in relation to the determinacy it is still determinacy, it is to be conceived as I or Not-I. Accordingly, in the intuition it necessarily depends on the determinacy itself, on the indeterminacy and determinacy.

Hence, the state of the repose, determinacy is the antithesis of the activity, and indeterminacy is the antithesis of the specific activity. However, repose as indeterminacy is a faculty (it is still determinacy). Thus, determinacy can be added as a positive characteristic to the mere negative characteristic and inactivity (they are never something for the intuition), which are to be still encountered in the concept of the faculty.

(Faculty) We can conclude from this. This faculty and every act presuppose a faculty. However, this is not necessarily a product of the imagination, in order to make an intuition of the act, i.e.—the act is subsequently to be preserved as real and thoroughly not real.

Corollary. Do not start with the faculty and make it a fact.

Corollary. 1) The concept of a faculty is attached to the consciousness of a specific act, and is synthetically in the intuition as a condition of the consciousness of the first—without us having a hand in it, entirely of itself. This proposition may be of importance.

Universality: Every consciousness is a determined [consciousness]: and so forth.

§ 4. *In the consciousness of the activity only self-consciousness is opposed to it (direct object of direct self-consciousness).*

How can I imagine proving this proposition?—I myself occur as duplicity, and I am indeed real in it.

This is straightforward: 1). A real stands opposed to the ideal, which is its object.

A real self stands opposed to self-consciousness, as an ideal self-consciousness.

1. A real self, however, is self-determination.—it reverts back: it is absoluteness, and in fact constitutes the I or the self.

1.) Postulate: to become conscious of one's own self-determining in the described thinking, and in its mode.

As above: It proceeds absolutely: etc.

If one now especially reflects on it by abstracting from what we have determined (whether it is a thinking, or something else, a thinking of the I, or of a Not-I), then it appears as a seizing and transferring in itself, its activity in the limited sphere.—Thus: this activity is thoroughly reposing and is simply there: it is everything and nothing. It grasps and directs itself.—Where does the

duplicity of the previous simplicity come from: the above seizing and directing stands there, and how does it create out of the nothingness? It completely creates itself and this entire state; it is absolute. (It is to be found in the intuition that is ascribed to everyone.)

2). We become conscious of this self-comprehension. If we reflect again here on this self-consciousness, then we can distinguish consciousness and the conscious in it.

How both appear opposed to one another. etc.

There is no other description (as everyone has to find in himself). Consequently, both are only relatively determinable: are only possible in relation to one another. for us.

Thus, self-consciousness has to have an object; a real self, otherwise it is not consciousness.

3). This real must be self, i.e., in a real sense as an absolute reverting: this is precisely the self-determining that was to be described: Q.E.D.

Corollary.

1). On the nature of this proof, which is partly developed from the concept of a self-consciousness; however, it is also partly a synthesis of the intuition.

2). Does the real come from the ideal; or vice-versa? No both are indivisibly united, though neither exists by itself. Already the entire division is nothing in itself, but the result of our finitude. The former has absolutely no meaning by itself.

Now § 5. Self-determination, however, can only arrive at consciousness in accordance with a freely outlined conception of determinacy, to which etc.

New result—concerning the entire consciousness.

* Oh yes: it arises precisely from the opposition and is a precise characteristic of the ideal. It is necessarily something fixed.

** Limitation to us, i.e., to everything that the I says / which the philosopher also has to clearly recognize.

Corollary 1. Why we give determinacy to an explanation, but not, however, to the *activity*:

Determining is thinking. We explain it insofar as we construct it through freedom before the eyes of the reader, as in the above concept of the I, and it can be intuited. It is a mode of activity.— Activity, however, cannot be comprehended at all, but only intuited.

Corollary 2). Ground of the universal validity of this proposition.

Corollary 3). One can never start with the faculty. I cannot at all say: I have a faculty.

Th[eorem]. 4. Only the self-determination of activity is the immediate object of immediate self-consciousness.

Postulate: the self-determining of thinking oneself, and the way to become conscious of this self-determining.

We now have insight into the point of the transition from the one state to the absolutely opposite state, from inactivity to activity, and from indeterminacy to determinacy, and this connects up once again with our insight. If we now, as we are able, (the grounds for this ability are left unexplained) ask how this transition is mediated—according to the assertion of our immediate consciousness—and how the inactivity is transformed into activity and the indeterminacy into determinacy, then everyone who understands our task, and remains standing at immediate self-consciousness will answer: absolutely through nothing. The transition is made from inactivity to activity thoroughly because etc. The activity determines itself and determines itself precisely so absolutely because etc. The activity itself makes itself into activity and determines itself as an activity of this kind. It creates itself out of nothing and creates itself exactly as it creates itself.

One intuits with all the abstraction through which one determines oneself.

We saw above that we precisely employ the same considerations concerning self-determining: and we distinguish how we again become conscious of this observation; this observation itself, *consciousness*, and the object of this observation, what is conscious and self-determining. Activity also belongs (according to the assertion) to immediate consciousness. In order not to misunderstand either of the two, we will call the first: *ideal* activity, the second: *real* activity, which is a mere word definition and through which nothing can be proved.

We have now distinguished both; how do they appear to us in opposition? Everyone is namely invited to intuit this distinction in his consciousness, and to state what he finds there. A distinction of this kind is solely made in and through intuition, because the distinction is indeed the intuition itself. Consequently, we have to look for the characteristics of the distinction solely in the immediate intuition. Everyone will find that the ideal activity ought to contain what is contained in it, and it is of such a kind as it is, not absolutely because it is this, but because its object is like it is. It is intuited as determined through the latter, attached to the same and advancing with it.

On the other hand, the real activity ought to be, because it is now like that; not because the ideal that is attached to it is such and such. The real now is what it is, the ideal as such is not at all, without a real, and is never because it is.

It is so, because the real is like this. The former absolute: the latter according to its determination, is dependent on the former.

The former appears viewed for itself, as an absolute being: in relation to the ideal, as something appearing to the same. There are no other descriptions apart from this relative description.

As I said, this is according to its determination. For according to its essence, the ground of the ideality should be a spiritual forming* and forming an image,

* not a real creating. (how this is to be distinguished and what it first signifies has to be discovered by everyone themselves in immediate intuition.)

<an intuition is precisely> not something that appears to everyone, and it is surely the actual seat of the transcendental and poetic talent; fortunately, the presence of this intuition does not render understanding <knowing> superfluous.

Seeing the task; is not impossible.

The real depth [. . .]⁷² of the dogmatist already is contained in this point: who does not at all know himself [. . .]⁷³

A mirror is an eye, and indeed not a mere mirror, but a self-reflecting mirror, and it is absolutely self-contained. To this extent it is also absolute; and this absoluteness that has already been referred to above (§ 1.), should not be suspended due to the present given dependence of the determination.— However, now there is something dependent in the real: precisely because it is fixing. In general, it is absolute only in its presence as something real.

Inferences

- 1). There is no ideality without reality, and vice-versa.
- 2). Neither is the ground of the other, but both are absolute, just as the intelligence is posited.
- 3). (The actual real self now is that of self-determining. Thus, this alone is the object of immediate self-consciousness.)

The absolute ideality can only be related to the absolute reality of self-determining.

- 3). Hence, the absolute ideal self-consciousness proceeds to a real [self-consciousness].

- 4). This real can only be the self. Proof.—

- 5). The form of the self is reverting back into itself: real: seizing itself, so that an intuition is related to this /

* This proposition is not correct. I cannot infer it from the concept of self-consciousness. For I have indeed only shown *ideal* self-consciousness to be absolute. Hence, the proof.— Correct. This is the main *nervus probandi* of the entire system: and hence this has to be clarified. Here is the real question according to the link: Intuiting is a self-forming. Accordingly, the immanent objective in the intuition itself is the self: through the necessary nature of the intelligence this becomes objective in a real sense: through the necessity of the intuition. There is no other self: it is always the same: only in the essence of the intelligence (this explanation is obvious) of the following twofold view, as fixed in itself / this does not do anything to the entry that has arisen: and is fixed through it.

Corollaries.

1). No ideality without reality and vice-versa.

As for the former, the ideality becomes ideality, becomes an intuiting, and the consciousness becomes fixed to something. It is precisely fixed to reality, and reality in general is nothing else than this.

As for the second: considering reality as necessarily posited, as containing the ground of its being in itself, then no conscious-becoming entity is able to conceive a being for no consciousness, [a being] that would be for no consciousness. However, the former would not be for any consciousness if it did not proceed to ideality.

2). If an intelligence is posited, none of these two contains the ground of the second, but both are absolutely posited in an indivisible unity. The former contains the reality, the ground of the determinacy of the ideality, but not what ideality is (a pure forming as such): likewise, from the ideality, the essence of reality can never be explained as a negation of the freedom of forming. But *that* absolutely it has to be present. The original division of the intelligence (this word is here self-explanatory) into ideality and reality, which are still indivisibly joined, is the first restriction of the finite intelligence. We are not even able to think beyond this.

3). Hence, this (§.1.) described ideal self-consciousness necessarily arises as soon as it is posited, i.e., immediately, a real. This real cannot be anything else than the self.

We can make this important proposition graphically clear. The mere ideal also appears in the intuition as doubled, as subjective-objective and § 1 is established and self-forming. This forming can be viewed as the subjective, the formed as the objective etc. Through the being fixed in the intuition, the latter now is necessarily fixed being, if the intuition should become real to an objective. It is not a new self: it is only the same as the intuition; according to the archetypal laws of the finite intelligence, it is now broken up in itself, and placed before itself. In a certain manner, it proceeds from the intuitive self and is therefore accessible to it. And this alone is what is in itself (only in another relation), and it can become immediately accessible to it.

It is better like this.

To the extent that the former consciousness is a self-consciousness, it cannot do anything else than proceed to the self. This results from the mere analysis of the established concept and to this extent the principle would be analytic. However, in this way nothing is achieved for our purpose.

But it now appears that mere ideal self-consciousness in the intuition is something doubled. We have answered the higher question: from where does the real arise? Not as formed but appearing as being. We can answer.* This real

must also be the self, and can be intuited as such. According to the above. The inner essence of the self is absoluteness, its form of reverting back into itself. If the latter is perceived in a real sense, then it is not (as something ideal), something self-forming; but something self-making; and indeed something absolute, something self-creating; consequently, it is the same self-determining that we proved above in the intuition.

Thus, we have here proved what we wanted to prove.

COROLLARY.

Concerning the method of proof: it is composed of thinking and intuition: why it has to be used here. Because we are back at the beginning again. Corollary. That one thereby does not go astray. Here we can speak of a move from self-determining to thinking.— It is also real as self-determining. The rest further below. We have only underlined thinking as what is most immediately accessible in our intuition, but found everywhere in the *universal validity* of forms.

SUPPLEMENT: ON WHAT IS DETERMINABLE.

Only these few words in a note at the bottom of the text.— I said in the preface to the previous presentation: I assume there will be misunderstandings that I could remove with a few words; but I did not say these few words in order to bring the reader to think for himself, and to draw the reader's attention to something; and because of this I am considered to be unbelievably arrogant. Nevertheless, I have not made this mistake in this new presentation and find it absolutely impossible to make it. However, in the process of working on this I can perhaps head off a misunderstanding, and will therefore say the following words: It has been said that the human being can procure himself, and he would even be necessarily conscious of this self-procurement: what nonsense! These words express a truly brute stupidity, and the same expression has already been said of the general public. But please; we are not speaking about the *public* here. Where has this concept already been derived? Where has this word even been mentioned? Haven't I amply recalled that my propositions are only valid for what has been proved in intuition? Haven't I, in the above § 1, supplement no. 2, explicitly recalled that the "I" here only signifies the pure reflex, and is not even the thinking subject. Here it means the pure, *real* reflex, and is not yet a subject of this reality.

In any event, only *self-determination* procures the latter. Now let the discerning reader judge whether I am able to prevent misunderstandings that are due to forgetfulness and thoughtlessness. Do I now have to add a few more cautionary words to prevent in turn misunderstandings of the above words (as I most certainly know, for example, that brute stupidity will in turn misunderstand

the above) and this in turn, the earlier words, and so on *ad infinitum*, and in the end I will not be able to finish a single § 1. The above requirements assume that we are able to elevate the absolute irrational through wit without any ground to reason: which itself is irrational. Any “reasonable” reader will therefore thank me for not taking into consideration every single irrationality.

SUPPLEMENT.

According to § 2, the possibility of the intuition of the activity as such presupposes inactivity in general; according to § 3, the activity as something determined, presupposes indeterminacy, which is still determinacy. Taking everything together, the act presupposes a faculty. Here the activity in general is found in the intuition as doubled: an *ideal* and *real*. What was valid in general also has to hold for the particular. To briefly summarize it: there consequently arises in us an ideal faculty in the intuition for the ideal act, and a real faculty for the real act. Everyone can indeed confirm and define the latter through the intuition of the particular. Confirming this universal proposition and the above particular intuition, everyone can confirm for himself the ideal and real act.

COROLLARY.

1). Whether this ideal is the real, or the real is the ideal.
 2). Two different series of the real in an ideal sense and the mere products of the imagination, have to be exactly distinguished in the entire following derivation.

1). Someone could ask—(and we pose this invalid question in order to clarify our own thoughts:)—whether the ideal would spring from the real or the real from the ideal: whether we know because of *volition* (since as willing the executed real activity appears here further under in the determined intuition) or whether we have volition because we know. This question is absolutely invalid and everyone ought to have seen its invalidity by means of the above: both are equally absolute, and the intelligence constitutes both in its indivisible unity. The intelligence is neither the one nor the other, but the unity of both*: not subject, taken here as ideal, and therefore first as an object, here taken as real, but an absolute subject-object or object-subject. Yet the object does not exist for itself, but only for the subject; and the subject does not arrive at itself, but at the object: and both do not have any significance separated from one another. (Their specific relationship with each other.)

If idealism is to be called a system that derives all consciousness from mere ideal activity, then the *Wissenschaftslehre* is not at all idealism. It rather rejects such a system as utterly inconsistent and incapable of explaining the consciousness that we all really have. (I also do not know if anyone has advocated this system. For

Berkeley at least, the Godhead through which the representations are produced in us was something genuinely real.)⁷⁴ Yet a number of people who have tried to refute the *Wissenschaftslehre* have taken it to be a system of this kind. Perhaps they had only read the first exposition of it, and were so exhausted by this that they did not arrive at the second.⁷⁵ In the latter they would have been immediately placed at the summit of a certain *striving*, as the first object of the consciousness of the real, and mediating every other real consciousness.

If dogmatism is a system that starts from a real without any relation to an ideal, as it really is—then through the foregoing propositions the *Wissenschaftslehre* has safeguarded itself against all dogmatism, and everyone who only reflects on himself, and as long as he reflects on himself, has fundamentally eradicated it from the ground up.

In contrast to this system, the *Wissenschaftslehre* is “ideal-realism” or indeed: a “real-idealism,” since it only necessarily asserts this derivation for an intelligence that recognizes itself; however, it allows the thought of the influence of foreign laws of the thing to be valid and explain itself for ordinary consciousness.

* solely positable in itself = X (and cannot be conceived), insofar as *both* are posited and *indeed as one*.

Transcendental idealism, on the other hand, signifies with this *idealism* a system in which all consciousness is derived from the immanent laws of the intelligence, which for it are neither ideal nor real, but the unity of both, so in this sense the *Wissenschaftslehre* is idealism. Indeed, since it only asserts the necessity of these derivations for the intelligence that knows itself, for ordinary consciousness [. . .]⁷⁶

2). Thus, in contrast with the above § 2 and 3 derived spheres of the mere products of intuition, we receive here a sphere of the ideal-real. In itself (it is really only ideal) and a consciousness of reality, is only achieved insofar as the latter first becomes intuitable through it. It is obvious that these are highly different constituents of our knowledge. Both will be further determined in due course, but it is necessary that one continually makes a distinction between them.

J. G. Fichte

Commentaries on Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism* and *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* (1800–1801)

i. While Reading Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism*⁷⁷

His classification of philosophy into two *fundamental sciences*.⁷⁸

I assert: nature as object is only *thought* by you: it only exists to the extent that you *think* it.

It can only be explained within the system of transcendental idealism if it is abstracted from the intelligence: a stage of this kind exists, and it is the transition. It is the same in *theology*. It is the objectified intelligence: and hence would be the third fundamental science.

Schelling says: without our *practical* nature we would not be driven to transcendental idealism. I reply: do you also consider the *freedom* of reflection (on mere cognition⁷⁹) to be practical? If so, you would be right. If not, then one would be already driven to idealism by mere reflecting on our *knowledge*.⁸⁰ If we only *knew* (about objects) without *knowing* in turn that we *know* them, then transcendental idealism would not be possible at all. And (knowingly) this standpoint is the standpoint of the philosophy of nature; *unknowingly*, it is the standpoint of dogmatism.

Against this Schelling could say: just as you include the philosophy of nature in your circle, I include idealism in mine, when I explain the *reflection of nature on itself*. I counter: 1). But have you really done that? (I have already *said* the same thing in the *Vocation of Man*⁸¹; but it could be *deduced* as necessary for nature.) 2). Supposing you could do this, could you also make a reflection on the reflection: and draw the whole of transcendental idealism into your domain, just as we do with your philosophy of nature? Obviously not.— Now, in particular, theology.

Schelling's concept of transcendental idealism is clearly different to mine. He is concerned with the third, intermediary part.

p. 28 “Self-consciousness is for us, (as transcendental philosophers), not a kind of *being* but a kind of *knowledge*.”⁸² Here again a lot speaks in favor of his distinction, and this should highlight the above necessary *duplicity*.

1). In any event, it could be considered as a kind of *being*. 2). However, I say all *being* is only in relation to *knowing*. He replies to me: no, all knowing is only a kind of *being*.

Am I more correct in saying what *I* say, or *he* in saying what *he* says? Will we ever comprehend each other? (Here Bouterwek’s⁸³ complaint concerning what cannot be proved also appears in a better light.)

I can say: *contemplate* yourself. He rejoins: If I place myself at your standpoint, then obviously you have won. But this is precisely what I do not wish to do. You cannot force me to do this.

Could I still do it in the above manner through *reflection on the reflection* (if he, for example, explains simple reflection as a mode of being?) *Obviously*: there arises here an *entirely new* series that does not accompany being, and which is elevated out of it: meanwhile the former, being, continues along its path independently of *all knowing*.

(This is how a comparison can be made with Schelling’s philosophy of nature. He thinks of nature as a *single activity*, which can be arrested by another [activity], and this first generates the phenomena.⁸⁴ The *intelligence*, in contrast, is a force that grasps and restricts *itself by means of itself*: this is the true opposition. Therefore, he should not draw this from nature anymore: never an I anymore.)

ii. Preparatory Work Contra Schelling (1801)⁸⁵

§ 1.: “[One gets there by] reflecting on what presents itself in philosophy [as occupying a position] between the subjective and the objective, which evidently must be an item standing indifferently over against both extremes.”⁸⁶ In philosophy? There is clearly another system apart from the system of identity.— a). in philosophy, for what is conscious of itself appears there as something *conscious*—as something objective. The subjective and the objective are purely united in it, however, i.e., it is therefore *knowledge* itself: *kat exochin*. . . . b). “which evidently must be an item standing indifferently over against both extremes.” What does this mean?

In its unity it is also clearly not indifferent against *both*, but the two arise out of it.

– from the *thinking agent*—as substantially posited at the outset . . . Here one really gets to the bottom of what Schelling understands by the “I” of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and by the word “*subjective*.”

However, let us now closely examine his abstraction, not from the two, but *from thinking and knowing itself*.

a). What is my view of the matter? The former identity *has insight into itself*, in the subjective and objective and in everything else. The philosopher

merges himself with this insight, and renounces his independence in it. Since it contains all knowledge, it obviously contains philosophical knowledge as well.

b). Schelling, however, now describes the former A, and reflects on himself [as separate] from what he has abstracted, but which invisibly drives his own nature, according to what *is in any event present in himself*, i.e., according to laws lying external to reason.

This method is thoroughly inverted, and no good can come of it.— And why not? Let he himself foretell how things will end up here. α). The *Wissenschaftslehre* also *thinks* and believes in thinking; however, through *intellectual* intuition it yields proof of the correctness of its thinking immediately in itself. β). A. contains much more than the difference of the subjective and the objective if it is described as *consciousness*. Schelling can never arrive at this through mere thinking.— He can never get out of the indifference through mere thinking. Every other word that he employs is surreptitiously obtained, and we shall soon see from where.

c). What is intellectual intuition for Schelling?— Only at most the intervention of the A between subject and object. . . . i.e., something *seen*⁸⁷ from philosophy, and the latter contains the *subjective* intuition of what remains permanently and thoroughly objective. Thus, it is a *perception*.⁸⁸ The whole thing is a perceptual system. Nothing at all like the inherently *immanent* light, like genuine *intellectual intuition*.

This is also why reason is not a pure *receiving*,⁸⁹ but only what is ultimately *received*.⁹⁰

However, he does not deny (well not decisively) its objectivity, because the latter is only possible in opposition to a *thinking entity*, and makes it into the final *standpoint* of philosophy.— How is he in error here? That is to say, how can his error be genetically explained?

Polyphemus without an eye. It is clear to me that he does not know the original meaning of “*subjective*,” as it is in A, but that he can only grasp it in relation to an already presupposed subject (a thinking agent in thinking). Thus, he can’t actually escape from his *I* as a presupposed substance, and this holds for his entire system. But it would be interesting, and even amusing, to make this clear to him.

From what kind of invertedness does a proposition of this kind arise? And what would result from it . . . 1). According to me, *absolute reflection* (subjective) and the *projection* of knowledge are indivisible in intellectual intuition.— A self- presupposed (substantial) knowledge first arises if a *particular* element of knowledge is described (which is precisely *thinking*). Yet I have joined both in a way that is still not entirely clear to me. It is only joined in this manner: knowledge, in which the absolute appears, is prepared in this free act of *higher reflecting*, as it were: - Knowledge first receives duplicity. (N.B. also make a note of this for the manuscript that is to be prepared.)— The process is the following: I *cannot know* without having an insight into my knowledge as freely

describing and producing. (immanent absoluteness). If I reflect on this again, then I presuppose my knowledge again. It is entirely correct: where is the center now? I cannot *do* anything—*do* I said—without reflecting and not reflecting, without doing and therefore the rest follows from this.

The nonsense of the second § has to be understood and clarified. 1) In order to be able to say this he thinks of a *being* without any further definition, and envelops it in the nimbus of non-being. It is through this perception that a *being* therefore exists, or that he can conceive it. 2) He now compares this with the earlier concept of reason.— and surreptitiously adds a *being for reason*, and again makes it into *knowledge*, which it did not have before. 3). *Apart* from reason, *in* it, it is extremely ambiguous— why not “*for*”? Precisely because it has an objectivity to it.

Method of proof.— One posits etc. Good: he wants to see whether and in what way his arbitrary thinking formally agrees with the first thought of a presupposition.

iii. On the Presentation of Schelling's System of Identity⁹¹

(In the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, Volume II, 2nd issue)

The *Presentation* begins with the following definition:

“I call *reason* absolute reason, or reason insofar as it is conceived as the *total indifference of the subjective and the objective*.”⁹²

Through an explanation or *real definition* of this kind the defined matter is presented and concluded as a finished object: hence, I don't see how the *transition* is supposed to be made from here to the following and the subsequent thoughts. Thus, one can only begin again with a new course, and posit something new that is likewise closed. The beginning can only be the most undetermined, the most unfinished, for otherwise we would have no reason to proceed further from it, and make it more defined through further reflection. Thus the following is only historical to the extent that it reports on a construction that is perhaps already executed, but not the executing philosophical construction itself.

Even worse, however, it is not clear how the one and absolute reason, apart from which nothing ought to exist, cannot be the *indifference* of the subjective and objective, without at the same time and in the same indivisible entity also being the *difference* of the two; that here consequently apart from the one [non-] *differentiating* reason, there is another *differentiating* one that would have to be kept in mind, which also could perhaps tacitly provide good service, insofar as the latter really is the tacit motive for moving beyond the empty and abstract indifference, to commence with nothing. This error is now not merely a small and insignificant offense, but has the most important consequences, because the entire deduction arises from this confusion.

Finally, by means of this definition reason⁹³ is perfectly determined and closed, that is to say, it is *dead*; and the author can indeed now repeat

and reformulate his proposition as much as he likes, but he will never find a means in a just and consistent way to get out of it and move on to his remote determinations.

If he now really begins to awaken the dead in his own manner, and in the following §§ attaches the predicates of nothing⁹⁴ and totality,⁹⁵ unity and equality to this concept of reason and tries to demonstrate with them, one should inquire as to how he himself has arrived at these predicates. Because if the essence of reason is really exhausted by this first definition, then this predicate has to be derived from an analysis of this definition as necessarily grounded in the essence of reason. Here the life and movement of this § 1—in the sense of retaining a *differentiating* reason—is already exhibited in the person of its author, and immediately emerges in the following §.

§ 2. “*Outside reason is nothing, and in it is everything.*” This proposition follows directly from § 1. *For all* possible differences—that is, first assuming such a difference, which consequently can only be assumed in factual experience—reason is the *indifference*. However, the following proof, which likewise is only formal and external, ruins everything.—It can neither be related to something external to it, like subject to object, nor like object to object, because both are contrary to the *assumption* of § 1, to conceive reason as *the indifference* of the subjective and objective.— a) We realize what follows from § 1: if absolute reason is related to what is assumed to be external to it, like the subjective to the objective, then it must have already renounced its essence, it must have already entered into difference. b) Objective to what is objective is utterly inconceivable. Objectivity exists and can only be conceived in an antithesis to what is subjective: object *for* a subject and vice-versa. We can never speak of the object of an object. If something were genuinely external to the absolute indifference, it would not at all stand in a relation to it; it would be precisely a *second* Absolute, a second universe, which could neither be affirmed nor denied.— We see that with this § the author already presupposes the much later definition (§ 26): “*absolute identity is absolute totality, the universe.*” For a proposition of the kind expressed in § 2 can only correctly follow from this.— In a straight path it should rather be: *What is external to the absolute indifference*—without deciding what and whether something is—*is in no sense present for it, in that it can neither relate to it as subjective or objective.*

§ 3. “*Reason is (a) simply one, (b) simply self-identical.*”— a) “Were this not so, the being of reason would require some additional ground other than reason itself: since reason itself contains only the *ground that it is*” *etc.*— Why do we suddenly find here the category of *ground*?⁹⁶ In order to help with the proof of the (formal) unity of reason? Ground is a far more specialized category that makes its entry when a qualitative determinacy⁹⁷ is to be explained.

But apart from this, the execution of this proof is either superficial or insufficient. If its goal is to prove that in all factually present difference only one indifference can be posited, then this already immediately follows from §§

1 and 2.— Or perhaps it is supposed to show (apart from everything factual)—something required of philosophical legal actions—that in accordance with its concept the absolute indifference is only *One*; (because it would not be *absolute*, just as the former proof can be perceived): thus *no* proof can demonstrate this, and the present one least of all. From the mere concept of the Absolute, *of being external to oneself*, an inference can be made to the unity or multiplicity of the same as to the existence of such a one. Mere thinking of a concept, of a form of subsuming, cannot obviously decide what is to be subsumed under it.

§ 4. According to the preceding, reason is *simple* in itself and *self-identical*. Hence, “the ultimate (it ought to be called “the unique”) *law of the same is the law of identity, generally expressed $A = A$.*”⁹⁸— But the following is also included: this does not only hold for the highest law but for all being (insofar as it is conceived in reason), since there is nothing outside reason.— The former law is generally recognized as the sole unconditioned truth for everything in thinking or being law (positive); expressing pure affirmation, which cannot simultaneously negate it—the form of the position, and absolutely nothing else. However, in this version it only appears to become a *mediated* law for things by being included in all the things of reason: it is not absolutely valid from them, but only because absolute reason is affirmed in them, just as he later says: only where the formal significance of this proposition is reinterpreted in a wholly unproved and unjustified manner in the sense of a self-positing that remains identical to the absolute reason in things.

Corollary 2 is conceded.

§ 6 teaches us that $A = A$, conceived universally, does not proceed from the being of A but only states that it falls under the law of identity, and in the case where it does, it is absolutely identical with itself: the sole being that is posited through the former proposition is therefore (not the being of A but) the being of identity. If under the being of identity nothing more is meant than the unconditioned validity of this law; i.e., what is termed “an eternal truth” in Corollary 2 of § 4 (an ideal being = universal validity, where we are not speaking of reality), then the above proposition may be conceded.

§ 7. “*The unique unconditioned cognition is that of absolute identity.*” That $A = A$ is *unconditioned* cognition is already implied by the preceding, where the former proposition is called an eternal truth. That is: it is the *unique* unconditioned cognition: it is to be proved here, because it *alone* expresses the essence of absolute reason (indifference). This can be conceded, despite once again the external manner of the proof.

§ 8 could be conceded, if the *being of identity* is supposed to signify nothing more than what has only been noted in § 6, and only the repetition of what has already been shown in this §, where the absolute being of identity (in this sense) was already demonstrated.

§ 9. “Reason is identical with the absolute identity. $A = A$ is its unique law of being; through this proposition, however, the being of absolute identity is immediately posited; and, since its being is identical with its essence” (§ 8, Corollary 1), “then reason in both essence and being is identical with the absolute identity; and this is why” (*Corollary*) “being belongs equally to the essence of reason and to that of absolute identity”⁹⁹—The proof is once again only formal. Its core rests on the fact that the absolute indifference is nothing else, i.e., it cannot be defined in any other way than as what is *equal to itself*; consequently, it is immediately identical with the absolute identity in accordance with *being* and *essence*. To begin with, the absolute identity is the absolutely universally valid law for all being; its *being*, if this expression is to make any sense at all, and cannot therefore signify anything else than the absoluteness, unconditional nature, and universal validity of the former law. That absolute reason is one with this identity may also mean: it falls under this law, it is to be subsumed under it, like everything existing. That the indifference is only subject to this law and can only be determined under it, but is not anything else (like the remaining concrete existence)—which is supposed to be expressed by the words: “in both essence and being is identical with the absolute identity”—does not change anything in this relation. Hence, up to now things stand as follows: absolute reason dissolves into the laws of absolute identity, another law, another determination, is not absolutely appropriate for it, because it already falls within the difference. This much is clear. However, it is not clear that the author implicitly wishes to obtain the proposition: “*Being belongs to the essence of absolute reason*”; this, however, can neither be proved in this manner nor in general be said of anything that its essence (concept) already involves its being. (Cf. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Bk. I, props. VII and XI.)¹⁰⁰

§ 10. *Absolute identity is simply infinite.*—What does “infinite” mean here? *Eternal*? *Absolute*? Without any connection to time? Then the proposition is to be conceded, but merely as an identical concept, because it is already immediately contained in the thought of absoluteness. But if “infinite” means *positively* infinite in its affections and determinations, as Spinoza says: *out of God’s essence there follows the infinite in infinitely many ways*¹⁰¹, then the proof does not suffice: “Then it would be *finite*” (i.e., only follows the *finite* in *finitely* many ways out of its essence), “then the ground of its finiteness would lie either in itself, i.e., it would be a cause of a determination in itself, that is: it would be simultaneously effecting and effective, hence not absolute identity.” Rather, the absolute must be conceived as being simultaneously *effecting* and *effected*: this is precisely the distinctive character of absoluteness, that it is the ground of its own being, that is, both effecting and effected, and in a word: because no duplicity is posited, no dual state, *the entire distinction is only a product of the thinking that analyzes the concept of being through itself*.¹⁰² Because

the former proof once again only remains external, it builds its argument in an absolutely untrue manner and which precisely contradicts the explicated concept: the absolute identity is precisely, because it is absolute, both effecting and effected, and this is the sole and appropriate concept. If it were finite, then the ground of its *finiteness* would certainly lie in itself, for it cannot be externally limited or determined in any other way, so it is certainly absolute. But it is not a contradiction to say that the absolute identity is simultaneously *finite* through itself in its absoluteness or infiniteness: absoluteness is precisely pure *self-determination*. Here it is still profoundly unclear in general, especially the concept of the *consequence* of determinations from the absolute; this means that the principle of a variable is now joined to that of an invariable. However, in an acute and constant deduction we would not know anything about this yet.

Briefly summarizing further:

§ 11. should be considered as taken care of by the above.

§ 12. “*Everything that is, is absolute identity itself*—according to one, (corollary 1)” and this is (corollary 2) “hence the singular, which is in itself or absolutely is.” We unconditionally accept this, and if we place ourselves at this standpoint, the proposition would already be contained in § 2. Even with the assistance of all the preceding propositions, we have not actually made any progress, except for acquiring the new expression: absolute identity, and $A = A$ applied to absolute reason.

§ 13 and 14 fully follow from the preceding: “*With respect to being itself, nothing has come into being,*” and “*nothing considered in itself is finite.*” Here in fact every origin and procedure is denied; absolutely nothing changes and transforms itself, because nothing exists except the absolute identity, the pure, unchangeable, primordial existence. Exactly as in Spinoza.¹⁰³—The question now is, how is a becoming, a change, above all a manifold external to another one to be brought into harmony: in short, the way in which we picture things in time (in the schema of change) and in space (in the schema of the manifold). Schelling is here at the standpoint of genuine speculation; what appears in time and space does not in fact exist; these forms are thoroughly void and have to be derived from true reality; as he asserts of every speculative philosophy. Yet he tries to make these forms thoroughly comprehensible in every *invariable one*, i.e., one has to respect in general how he wants derive a *finiteness* out of *eternity*; for this derivation is precisely the task of philosophy.—The corollary and the explication in § 14 exactly expresses this standpoint. He says: “considering things as finite is precisely the same as not considering them in themselves; likewise to consider them as multiple.” Formally considered, it contradicts the latter supplement: if we cancel what is multiple in things, then they themselves are cancelled; but

in general it is not at all a matter of the things; we still do not presently know that anything exists, except the being of the one absolute identity. (Precisely in the “Explication” the writer allows a freer and more indicative language, and hence we do not have to criticize these unproven expressions. “A truth that *Spinoza* alone of all previous philosophers acknowledged, even if he did not *fully* carry out its demonstration, and express it *clearly*” etc. Why isn’t it fully explained and clearly expressed? In truth, it is more complete and clearer than in Schelling himself. Where is there a more precise expression of this than in Spinoza: “God is the immanent but not the transitive cause of all things”?¹⁰⁴

§ 15. “*Absolute identity is only under the form of the proposition $A = A$; or: this form is immediately posited through its being.*” Before proving this through the proposition $A = A$ the being of absolute identity is posited (§ 6); and obviously the absolute identity is only to be conceived and described under the form of the proposition $A = A$; just as now, inversely, $A = A$ is posited through its being, so it can only be in the form of the proposition, hence it does not allow it to be joined with any sense. In thought, $A = A$ is the expression, the schema for the absolute law of identity: to ascribe some kind of being to it, or to assert that the identity necessarily exists (objectively, yet clearly) under its form; furthermore, one has to ascribe a duplicity of subject and predicate to it: and in the unity, it is at once subject and predicate: all of this does not make any sense according to the above explanation: they are logical forms, and it does not make any sense at all to elevate them to the level of *objective* existence. Moreover, form and being are arbitrarily distinguished in the one, simple and indistinguishable. However, both coincide here, the identity does not have any other form than its existence. Therefore 1) would in general be to prove how in the absolute identity form is to be distinguished from being: it is nothing else than pure existence that is *equal to itself*; but this *self-equating* means nothing other than that the form has to be distinguished in the identity from the being, nothing else than an *expression* of pure *relation, position*; (“it is *this* and nothing else”). But conceding this too, then 2) $A = A$ cannot be the objective form of something; for this duplicity itself only exists as thinking and for thinking; this distinguishes subject and predicate, which *objectively* does not exist as a *duality*; for the judgment, e.g., “the tree is green,” exactly says that the two are joined in a unity, it therefore negates all duality in it and precisely holds the two apart only first in thinking in order to even more firmly join them together. Thus, in no sense can $A = A$ become the objective form of something or other. In corollary I we see that $A = A$ is also called the form or “type” of the being of absolute identity.

Corollary 2: “What belongs merely to the *form*, is not posited *in itself*.” In itself, of which the antithesis: posited through another. Not the absolute, but through the absolute; just as in Spinoza the attributes and modes are the form of the absolute¹⁰⁵; these are posited through the absolute, first introduced

by its being; this especially distinguishes the thinking in it; otherwise there is no *succession* or *becoming* in it.

§ 16. “Between the subject and predicate in $A = A$ no intrinsic opposition is possible.” It is indeed the same as what is posited in A and in the universe; this is self-explanatory. Yet here there is inserted another distinction between in itself¹⁰⁶ and not in itself,¹⁰⁷ when he alludes to the factual oppositions; where without bothering in the slightest about the derivation of this facticity, the proposition should be prepared, these oppositions do *not* exist in themselves. This is already apparent from the above; rather, his chief concern ought to be to make it understandable to us, and how it nevertheless appears capable of doing this. Here the distinction between the “in itself” and “existence” is overlooked, which is subsequently a good thing. Because if the same A represents the position of the subject and predicate, then the form of absolute identity is: one form of identity of identity (corollary 2).

§ 17. “There is an original cognition of absolute identity, and this is posited though the proposition $A = A$.” “There is a cognition of identity as such” (“This is a fact; we infer this because we immediately recognize the truth of the proposition $A = A$.) Since everything that is, is in the absolute identity, then knowledge is also in it; but since this does not follow from the essence of the absolute identity then it follows from the form, and belongs to the form.— But the form is just as original as its being. Everything, therefore, which is posited by the form, is likewise equally *original* with the absolute identity. This also occurs with absolute knowledge. The absolute identity is therefore originally under the form of absolute knowledge. (Which is now more distinctly emphasized in § 18.) Much could be raised against this. From the fact of knowing, the latter, as fact, would exist integrated in the form of absolute identity: because there is absolute knowing, the identity is also a kind of knowing. This can be conceded with respect to the earlier assumed proposition: there is only *One* etc.; however, we never arrive at proposition 18 through this: *everything which is*, is the *form* of being in accordance with *knowledge of the absolute identity*.— Where does this “everything” come from? This insertion is also revealed in the words of the proof: if knowing belongs to the form of the proposition of absolute identity, with the former inseparable from being, then—everything that is, is the form of being according to the knowledge of absolute identity.— What is this supposed to mean: knowledge of the absolute identity? Nothing else was said in the preceding except that the proposition $A = A$ is immediately known. The purpose is again merely a difference and probably the most important one, which is to blur the difference between subjectivity and objectivity. This is clarified even more in the following proposition, where this “form of being and of absolute identity” is described in more detail.

§ 19. (If namely identity is absolute knowledge, then it can only be self-knowledge, as absolute identity.) “Absolute identity is only under the form of

cognizing its identity with itself = self-knowledge as absolutely equal to itself. We concede the proof, which bears the same character as the previous remarks. What is, is the absolute identity, and indeed in the form of self-knowledge of identity as equal to itself. This necessary form of its being, however, is infinite (§ 20), because in accordance with its own being it is infinite. This would be conceded if the foregoing had style and were correct: but the entire theory of the self-knowledge of absolute identity remains unproven.

§ 21. In this infinite self-knowledge, subject and object are clearly distinct: hence through this form the absolute identity infinitely posits itself as subject and object: $I = S/0 \infty$; nothing else—not say, $S I 0 \infty$; this is not posited. Because no opposition *as such* can now occur between subject and object (corollary to § 22), if both are originally joined in the *absolute identity*; then only *quantitative difference* is possible between the two (§ 23). Once again the insufficiency of the proof is exposed: because the identity that is essentially equal realizes itself in the two, so they should be not *qualitatively* but *quantitatively* different. Why can't one and the same exist in genuine opposition? Nothing is said about this incredibly important relation! Essentially it is the *same*, but according to the author the quantitative difference does not suffice in the essence, but only in the *form*. But it was proved that it cannot also exist under the opposite form, so the quantitative difference also cannot help, for difference, indeed opposition, always posits this. Thus, here there are always gaps and arbitrariness.

§ 24. The *subject* = *objectivity* (as the eternal form of identity) is not *actu*, if the former *quantitative difference* is posited.

§ 25. This difference and lost equilibrium is evened out, as it were, in the absolute identity; the earlier opposition is not distinguished in the latter: the identity that is forever lost in the singular, is restored again in the “*infinite*.” (Cf. the explanation to § 30.)

§ 26. *Absolute identity is absolute totality*: this clearly follows from the entire assumptions of the system. In other words, everything comprised in the sphere of reality = the absolute identity: this totality is called the *universe*.

§ 27. *Hence, in the absolute totality there is no quantitative difference*, but only what is external to it. (Schelling calls what is external, the being of a “*singular*” thing.) Consequently, there is no *singular* thing. And it is asserted in a note that something only becomes singular by being torn out of the totality through an arbitrary separation. In itself, everything is in the totality, lives in the whole, and this is precisely the absolute identity.

§ 29. Therefore, only with regard to singular being, i.e.,— if I consider something in isolation—(however, there is not a word about how I arrived at being able to consider something in isolation, how it is even necessary, not the totality, nor how the singular being and intuitable ought to be, but always intuiting the singular as singular, i.e., precisely not the “solely intuitable”)—and it is compared in this isolation with the other, the *quantitative difference* is posited.

§ 30. With regard to the singular, if this quantitative difference now really occurs, for example, if *a* compared with *b* is posited as predominately subjective or objective; then his “assertion” (hypothesis) completely disappears according to this difference with regard to the *totality*—since we have not found the slightest trace of an actual proof.— If we could ascertain the relationship between subject and object in the totality, then it would exhibit the most perfect equilibrium. However, does this mean that nothing would remain over except the same identity, in which nothing could be distinguished? (By the way, this proposition is contained in Spinoza.)¹⁰⁸ The attached explication is exceedingly important. For the moment we will leave all these questions to one side.

§ 31. However, what was only hypothetically suggested in the foregoing, namely that if there is difference etc., the absolute identity is additionally the absolute indifference—then according to this proposition it has to be treated positively: it is the indifference of the subject and object.— For this is its “eternal form”; the difference in the singular implies its suspension—equilibrium—it is also in the totality or identity.

§ 32 and 33. The universe = *absolute identity*, i.e., the former is eternally equal to the latter.

§ 34. In every part of the universe, i.e., in every single thing, regardless of its quantitative difference in relation to another thing, the absolute identity always remains one and the same.

Corollary 2. *Nothing can be destroyed according to its being*; for what is, is only the universe, or the *eternal identity*. And if it can be destroyed in its parts, then it could also be destroyed in the whole: this would not ground any difference at all. What is eternal in itself, is also eternal in the entire extent of its essence. In this connection we should not expect a proposition of this kind from Schelling, insofar as the foregoing propositions were aimed at integrating a principle of finitude into the absolute identity, which here is once again expressly suspended and excluded. If we therefore agree with him on this point then nothing at all could “be destroyed” (*nothing passes away*): so this too is again incompatible with the following assertion:

§ 35. “*Nothing singular has its ground in itself.*” The rejection of the genesis, of arising and passing away, also entails the rejection of the concept of “singular” and is entirely annihilated. It is not only not eternal in general, but it does not even exist at all. The corollary to § 36 is supposed to come next: it therefore requires another corollary, one that is prior to its ground; and indeed, this ground (according to § 36) is to be another “single thing,” and so on *ad infinitum*. And indeed, in accordance with the following demonstration: the “singular” is not the ground of itself: nor the absolute identity; for the latter only contains the ground of the totality of its being, insofar as it is not singular, but included in the totality. Thus, this is what the singular is according to Schelling’s assertion, and yet it is also not; both of course may contain its

fine speculative sense; but in order to resolve these contradictions nothing has happened here. This is a logical or formal deficiency. Yet how does he arrive at this? Here he wants to incorporate *becoming*, and therefore considers individual things in a twofold manner: how they are from the standpoint of absolute totality; they are included in the latter, and therefore cancelled as singulars: they cannot pass away or be destroyed in some part of another; however, this does not mean that the principle of finitude, the eternal becoming and passing away, is still derived, but rather its negation. Hence, there *is* no singular or finite.— Instead of continuing ahead on the straight path of deduction, and deriving either the finite from the concept of absolute totality, or rejecting it as *non-being*: it is accepted as a fact and allowed to stand. The proof here also turns on *Spinoza's* famous conclusion¹⁰⁹: Everything that exists, is eternal, since it is in the absolute identity: now becoming is factually singular, i.e., it arises and passes away; thus, *becoming* is eternal; *it is an endless series of finite and separated things*. Obviously this conclusion is completely un-speculative and insufficient. If he cannot derive the determination of finitude, then it has to remain at the result of the Eleatics: *finite things do not exist!*

§ 37. The quantitative difference of the subjective and objective is the sole ground of finitude. What does “ground” [*Grund*] signify here?— That one thing can be distinguished from another thing; and inversely, the equilibrium, indifference is *infiniteness*. (Thus, not really in equilibrium, but *infinite* calculus, which never purely works out. “The universal expression of the form of all finitude is therefore $A = B$,” i.e., A is indeed included in a quantitative difference in relation to B; nevertheless, it is equal (=) in both; and this difference likewise vanishes with respect to the totality; yet the latter is infiniteness, because the series of different finitudes extends into infinity.

§ 38. “*Every single being as such is a specific form of the being of identity,*” i.e., a specific quantitative difference; but this, however, is not its own being, which is only in the totality.— Therefore, the totality (in which, because it encompasses everything, the difference is again compensated in indifference) in single things is a difference of things, which develop themselves in a resulting infinitely diverging series: thus, the identity would have to be studied from two standpoints, in its totality (whose law $A = A$), and insofar as it is the ground of singulars, which always occur in a quantitative difference ($A = B$). This can be completely conceded (apart from the attempt at a proof). There now arises an incessant and empty interplay of the singulars, that is and is not, e.g., in the words of the remark I to § 38: “*a first point can never be specified where absolute identity has passed over into an individual thing, if the series of determinations did not reach back without end, the individual thing would not be incorporated into totality, but would have to be for itself as an individual thing*” (once again, what does *this* mean, and where is the concept of “*for itself*” derived in the above?)—“*which is absurd.*”

§ 39. In singular entities the absolute identity exists under the same form that it has in the whole, and vice-versa. It is the same in all singular entities, the same is alive in everything; consequently, it is indivisible (§ 34). Here the earlier principle of quantitative difference is again superseded by a new, unexpected conceptual leap.

§ 40. "Everything singular is *infinite* in the potency of its difference": hence another determination of "*infiniteness*." The difference is only due to the specific degree of the relation between subject and object; this degree (potency), however, is infinite in its singularities. Every single determinacy of this potency propagates itself into infinity; it then expresses the form of identity in a certain manner; therefore as eternal etc. (*adde* § 41).

§ 44. "*All potencies of the absolute identity are absolutely simultaneous.*" (?)— Now some supporting principles are interpolated. I) $A = B$ is the expression of the potency: A the subjective factor—B the objective factor. B is therefore what is original, A in contrast, is what B cognizes (?). However, this distinction as such does not occur in two elements but A is as much as B; both are originally one and indivisible in existence. He then compares this with Spinoza's *extension* and *thinking*, and then adds: here they are not just joined in an ideal manner, as Spinoza typically understood them, but really and in reality. II) and III) A is the limiting, but B is the *infinite*, yet *limitable* (namely the universal extension according to no. I). Both factors, however, are original and necessary, i.e., infinite, but in the opposite direction, one as the limitable, the other as the limiting principle. Thus, it is to be understood: B is the entire communal side of the *real*, i.e., *not* the *generating difference* in itself; this belongs to A, which is added through the various increasing potency of subjectivity). (Moreover, Schelling's relation to the *Wissenschaftslehre* becomes decisively clear through this: this subject-objectivity $A = B$ for him is precisely the I-form; therefore everything is in the I-form, whereas the *Wissenschaftslehre* in contrast only makes nature into pure objectivity. He thinks he has proved that the existential form in general is $= I$ [*Ich*]; that nothing can have reality without this. Couldn't one show him here the lack of clarity and confusion? Not a distinct consciousness, but *instinct*, *blind* instinct. However, is this the absolute principle of things, the original beginning? Does *real* reason first emerge from out of this conscious-less reason, to first arrive at itself, and to *contemplate* itself?— Couldn't this contradiction be demonstrated to him in a purely formal manner?)

§ 45. *Neither A nor B can be posited, but both are joined together with the predominance of the one or the other, which is again reduced to indifference with regard to the universal.*

§ 46. *A and B can only be posited as predominating according to opposing directions.* Either the *one* predominates in one of the parts, or in *another*; in the sphere where A is the predominating one, B is therefore the subordinate

one, and vice versa; in this regard, however, the indifference always governs in the totality. Consequently, this is obviously to be presented under the form of his line.

Explication 2. “What holds for the entire line, also holds for all the parts of the same into infinity.” In every [part] either $A = B$ or $B = A$ with $A = A$. Each of its points contains the *same single* absolute identity in the subject-objectivity, but only insofar as one predominates. Thus, everywhere two points are essentially and inseparably united. “The constructed line is therefore infinitely divisible, and its construction is the ground (?) of all the divisibility into infinity” (Here it is obviously not a question of the line as a geometrical figure: it is only an analogy; i.e., only concerning what can be constructed in it; thus, why is the question of the divisibility of the line, the ground of every other divisibility? Etc. However, what he means is this: in every point of the universe these two components are united, the universe is also “divided” into infinity, can be separated into distinctions; he is again speaking of what he calls a single thing. However, in both the former and latter the derivation of the “ground” of this distinction is still lacking, or this principle of finitude in the absolute identity.)

§ 47. *The constructed line is the form of being of the absolute identity in the singular as well as in the whole.* He thereby means that in § 39 he will also clarify the requirement as to how the identity in every single part still remains the same.— The line is certainly not the form of the being of the absolute identity, but the image¹¹⁰ of the form. In it the form can be constructed in its infinity, and therefore also be assumed in the later propositions; the line as the perfected expression of the form.

§ 48. “*However, A and B are contained in every point of the line*” since the image is only under the form of the subject-object in the predominance of the one or the other; A and B are therefore immediately posited with the being of the absolute identity.

§ 49. “The constructed line (or the *form*), considered in itself, can contain the ground of no *individual* potency;” since it contains them all in it.

§ 50. appears to us to directly follow from § 48.

Explication. This presentation calls relative totality the “joint reality” (being, existence) of A and B; both are really joined, *exist*, and belong as a whole to it. According to the subject or object in this relative totality, various potencies are now predominately posited.

§ 51. *The first relative totality is matter.* The relative totality *is*, as certain as the absolute identity is; since this is only under the form of $A = B$; however, the *united being* of both factors is thereby immediately posited.

The main elements of a comprehensive critique have been prepared, and the entire difference between Schelling and me can be traced back to a couple of points of difference.

Introduction to F. W. J. Schelling's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*¹ (1801) and *Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy* (1802) [Extract]

Friedrich Schelling's new presentation of his system, the first work in what came to be deemed his "philosophy of identity," was occasioned by a double confrontation with Fichtean idealism in the summer and autumn of 1800: a more general challenge (documented in the *Correspondence*) to the place of a philosophy of nature in the transcendental tradition of the *Wissenschaftslehre* that had slowly taken form in Fichte's mind as he read, sometimes cursorily, Schelling's writings from 1795 to 1800, and a more specific epistemological challenge to the supposed independence of philosophy of nature that Carl August Eschenmayer voiced in Schelling's own journal on *Naturphilosophie*.²

Early in 1800, Schelling wrote to Eschenmayer to remind him of his promise to submit some articles for the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*.³ In a letter from April of 1800 no longer extant, Eschenmayer expressed the view that central claims Schelling had advanced in his 1799 essays on the philosophy of nature were circular,⁴ viz., that the business of philosophy of nature is to effect a "self-construction" of nature, that the idea of nature is necessary, and that it necessarily involves a duality of principles. Either the idea of nature is a priori or these suppositions are borrowed from an empirical overview of nature.⁵ In a manuscript submitted to Schelling in the summer of 1800 for the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* and printed in the first issue of Vol. II, January, 1801 under the title *Spontaneität = Weltseele oder die höchste Prinzip der Naturphilosophie*, Eschenmayer argues that there can be dual principles in nature only if there are dual and opposite tendencies in the subject who is conscious of nature—firstly, a principle of spontaneity that tends to infinity, secondly, a limiting nature-principle that strives to limit and confine activity to finitude, and in addition a synthesis that equalizes them—which can only be *drive* or impetus (*Trieb*), the foundation of sensation and intuition. As the first presentation of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* had suggested, the laws of nature are projected upon

objectivity from the work of mind (*Geist*), since only in us is there to be found a principle of spontaneity or originary motion.⁶ Since empirical science cannot establish the claim to systematic unity in nature, a philosophy of nature needs a “propaedeutic” or foundation, which it indeed finds in transcendental philosophy (or *Wissenschaftslehre*). It is simply too soon, argues Eschenmayer, to proclaim an independent philosophy of nature.⁷

In the same issue, which Schelling finished editing and sent to his publisher early in the autumn of 1800,⁸ Schelling appends a reply to Eschenmayer’s critique under the title *Über den wahren Begriff der Naturphilosophie und die richtige Art ihr Probleme aufzulösen* (On the True Concept of the Philosophy of Nature and the Correct Way to Solve Its Problems). – Later that autumn, Schelling receives essentially the same challenge to his notion of the independence of philosophy of nature from Fichte⁹, and he quickly replies to it in a letter¹⁰ that recounts the history of the development of his philosophical views in general and those on nature in particular in words that are almost identical to those used in the *True Concept* essay.¹¹ Though this theme of the independence of *Naturphilosophie* will become the major point of contention in the *Fichte-Schelling Correspondence* over the course of the next year, it seems that it was Eschenmayer’s attack that directly occasioned the writing of the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.

In the *True Concept* essay, Schelling puts the disagreement between Eschenmayer and himself in the starkest possible terms: while the Fichtean Eschenmayer locates the activity of nature in the I, Schelling places it in nature itself. This claim of agency in nature, the precondition of philosophy’s attempt to present nature as self-constructing, for now remains unexplained, but Schelling promises that the next issue (which appeared at the Easter book fair on 26 April, 1801) will contain a new presentation of his system, one in which Eschenmayer’s dualism of nature and spirit, and all other dualisms that haunt ordinary consciousness, will be abolished and the oneness of the world proved.¹² But the one world Schelling has in mind is no longer the world of consciousness, or a transcendental construction of the inward activity or agility behind consciousness such as the newer versions of the *Wissenschaftslehre* articulated; it is the natural world, the one place where the identity-in-difference of the absolute comes to expression—as in Spinoza’s one world which is both *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. Nature is not to be viewed as a product of reason; reason itself comes to be in nature. In this reversal that Schelling announces in the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, transcendental idealism is transformed into *objective idealism*, to use the name Hegel gave to the nineteenth-century heir of Kantian-Fichtean subjective idealism.¹³

The *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* was composed in a scant six months, for Schelling writes extensively to Goethe late in January of 1801 on a central theme of its version of *Naturphilosophie*¹⁴—the role of *metamorphosis*

(Goethe's term) or chemical transformation in connecting inorganic nature to organic nature—and again a month later with a short apology for forgetting to return his Spinoza volumes.¹⁵ Goethe's theories of light and plant metamorphosis are in fact highlighted in Schelling's *Presentation*. Goethe had daily studied Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* and *General Deduction of the Dynamic Process* with Niethammer from early September to early October in 1800. Schelling spent the Christmas holidays that year with Goethe in Weimar and celebrated the turn of the century with Goethe, Schiller, Hufeland and Steffens. The influence of Goethe's major scientific notions, both the unity of light and the recapitulative nature of plant morphology, can be seen in the *Presentation's* philosophy of nature, where the *Potenzen* or levels of nature's elaboration are presented not as discrete stages that nature actually has and has to progress through in a linear fashion,¹⁶ but as repetitions of the one fundamental activity of nature: to recall apparent difference back to essential identity and thereby exponentially increase (*potenzieren*) the display of the unity and vitality of what Schelling calls "the prime existent"—matter, coextensive with the whole of nature. What Schelling finds in Goethe's holistic approach to science is a confirmation of the clues provided historically by Plato and Spinoza—nature is one and living through and through, despite the dissociative tendencies of ordinary perception and scientific empiricism (which Schelling calls "atomistic" or "physicalism") to anatomize the living whole into discrete packets of dead matter.¹⁷

The body of the *Presentation*, as we have it,¹⁸ with its uninterrupted elaboration of theorems, corollaries, lemmata, and explanations from an opening meditation on what reason is and logically requires flows seamlessly from the exhibition of the logic of appearance (or metaphysics of identity) to its embodiment in the major structures of nature, closely corresponds to what Schelling told Eschenmayer he was going to do—display the unity and vitality of nature without recourse to any fundamental dualism (such as the genetic device of a fundamental categorical divide between an ever-hidden productivity and always only-apparent product that organized the theoretical section of the *System of Transcendental Idealism*.) It also mirrors the influence of Schelling's historical and contemporary fellow "nature-monists": Plato, Spinoza, and Goethe. —The Introduction to the work, however, attempts to address Fichte's concerns about whether philosophy must necessarily be done from the perspective of the highest potency (the I) or can somehow start at the basic level, nature. Schelling clearly wishes, at least for the moment, to publicly sidestep the issue of whether or not there is one fundamental difference that separates Fichte and himself, or whether perhaps misreading of his works on nature and transcendental philosophy have merely given that suggestion. But his claim that he has always had a basic logic that united his philosophies of nature and consciousness is clearly revisionary and anachronistic. And the fact that the *Presentation of My*

System of Philosophy breaks off with a mere promise to extend the account of nature from the border between inorganic and organic nature to the sphere of consciousness, and actively mirror the three potencies passively displayed in nature to their active counterparts in the structures of consciousness, suggests that Schelling is either uninterested or unable to take the account in that direction. In any case, Schelling is his own best commentator when, in the 1833/34 or 1836/37 *Munich Lectures on the History of Modern Philosophy*, he refrains from calling the works of 1800-1801 philosophy of identity, and instead subsumes them under the broader labels *Naturphilosophie* and “Negative (i.e., merely conceptual) Philosophy.”¹⁹

The body of the *Presentation* falls into two sections: § 1 – 53 elaborate a metaphysics of identity or “indifference”²⁰ in a deductive manner that is modeled on Spinoza’s *more geometrico* exposition in the *Ethics*, while § 54 – 159 describe the fundamental structures of nature’s *activity* in stepwise exposition that works its way up from the most basic phenomena (matter in its simplest properties) to more relational or interactive properties (physical, chemical and what we would now call biochemical processes) to properly biological phenomena that plants and animals exhibit. Schelling says he adopts Spinoza’s axiomatic presentation as a model because of its clarity and brevity, but he does not apply the word so fashionable since Kant, “deduction,” to his procedure, nor does he make claims of necessity or completeness for his results.

The two essays on philosophical methodology from 1802 that follow in this volume, the first on *intellectual intuition*, the second on *philosophical construction*, were written soon after the *Presentation* was published in 1801.²¹ The complementary techniques they describe involve, first, a unique nondiscursive insight into a pervasive principle that is both logically and ontologically necessary, and, subsequent to that, a taxonomic construction of the total horizon of phenomena wherein each singular phenomenon finds its place through a process of interrelating features of generality and particularity—a function of philosophical “imagination” (*Ineinsbildung*).

The two major sections of the *Presentation* are complementary, though the axiomatic derivation is continuous and without break: the metaphysics of identity shows how difference (finitude, the ground of individual phenomena) lurks within primordial identity as reason must conceive it and hence *seems* to be posited from its own side independent of the absolute, while the philosophy of nature shows how in its fundamental modes of activity, nature *abrogates* the seeming independence of the individual entity (or level of natural functioning) and returns it to its place in nature as a whole—relative totality or the unity of the “prime existent.”²²

Abstractly put, the metaphysics of identity aims to demonstrate that absolute identity is realized as totality or universe (through a logical process that moves from relative identity, to duplicity, to relative totality). The philosophy of nature displays a stack of processes that reveal upon investigation that items

which initially seem independent and unrelated (pertaining to the order of duplicity) actually function only within relative totality. Identity means there is only one nature, one universe; nature itself reveals progressive integration or reintegration of difference back into indifference. It is the activities of nature—gravity, cohesion, light, electricity, magnetism, chemical metamorphosis, etc.—that make individual items into the one existent, nature. Schelling's essential agreement with Spinoza is a matter of logic and metaphysics, not just expository procedure: the finite, which presents itself to the senses as individual, exists only in and as the infinite. The infinite or the universe (*natura naturata*) is the sole realization of absolute identity (*natura naturans*), and the seeming individual is but a function of the infinite—in Spinoza's language, a mere mode of an infinite attribute. It is the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy's* rejection of ontological standing for the individual that most separates Schelling's "new" system from Fichte's idealism. As some passages in the 1800 *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*²³ suggest, for Fichte thinking must be intuitive, singular, and a genuine *self*-intuition if it is to be original and self-validating thinking. The new philosophy of identity Schelling offers occupies the standpoint of nowhere and nobody, and as purely conceptual thinking, it must be regarded as built upon supposition and speculation, not self-activity and direct self-discovery.²⁴

Though Schelling's son and first editor supplied no outline for this work, the reader might be guided by the following approximate divisions:

I. The Metaphysics of Identity

§ 1 – 9: The nature of reason is to operate in the space between subjectivity and objectivity, i.e., their indifference. Reason's sole rule is the law of identity ($A = A$), which establishes the same under the minimal condition of difference in position, viz., A as subject and A as object.

§ 10 – 20: what is posited identically in essence (*Wesen*) is posited as dual in form. This is equivalent to Spinoza's doctrine of the unity of substance, despite the duality of attributes that we apprehend.

§ 21 – 23: the absolute can be realized or expressed in existence only as an infinite positing of finite instances of subject-and-objectivity. On the surface, these theorems seem to violate Jacobi's core summation of Spinoza's monism, that it permitted no transition from the infinite to the finite orders. But Schelling asserts such a transition here as "self-evident."

§ 24 – 31: absolute identity or *qualitative indifference* is expressed in finite existence as *quantitative indifference in the whole* alongside *quantitative difference* in the individual. Much of the discussion in the final letters of the *Fichte-Schelling Correspondence* turns on this formula.

§ 42 – 49: "Potentiation" or the replication of the basic structure of subject-objectivity at progressively more subjective ("higher") levels can be represented as the "constructed line," borrowed from Eschenmayer.²⁵ The line

represents the realization of difference within relative totality inasmuch as its two directions (*Richtungen*) correspond to opposed dynamic tendencies (also *Richtungen*) in the finite existent, one directed inward, one outward.

II. *The Philosophy of Nature*²⁶

§ 50 – 54: the “prime existent” is matter, which manifest first as gravity—the equalization of centripetal and centrifugal forces or relative decrease and increase in cohesion.

§ 55 – 67: a first and highly general presentation of potentiation in nature at the most basic level (Physics): A¹ is gravity, A² is light; A³ is dynamic process.

§ 68 – 106: a second, more specific presentation of potentiation in nature at the most basic level, but specifically *within dynamic process*:

§ 68 – 76: A¹ = gravity, specific gravity, density of matter, variations in cohesion;

§ 77 – 82: A² = magnetism;

§ 83 – 92: A³ = electricity, heat, and conduction.

§ 92 – 106; a romantic, i.e., relatively disordered, interlude that touches on cohesion as the fundamental natural process; terrestrial astronomy, and Goethe’s theory of light.

§ 95, 1 – 13: reductive explanation of all natural phenomena in terms of cohesion.

§ 106 – 144: the second level of potentiation in nature (Inorganic Nature):

§ 106 – 111: A¹ = recapitulation of the dynamic process (“*dynamic activity*”);

§ 112 – 135: A² = *metamorphosis* or chemical transformation (“*the dynamic sphere*”).

§ 136 – 143: A³ = biological organization (the unity of light and gravity, or the interiorization of the polarity of gravity, magnetism, electricity => sexual dimorphism in plants and animals).

§ 144 – 154: Brief sketch of the third level of potentiation in nature (Organic Nature)

A¹: physiological function of sensibility ≈ organic nature of plants;

A²: physiological function of irritability ≈ organic nature of animals;

A³: physiological function of reproduction (sexual dimorphism) ≈ the human body as the organic basis for intelligence (*Geist*).

F. W. J. Schelling

Presentation of My System of Philosophy (1801)

Preface.²⁷

For many years I sought to present the one Philosophy that I know to be true from two wholly different sides—[both] as philosophy of nature and as transcendental philosophy. I now find myself impelled by the present situation of science to publicly bring forward, sooner than I wish, the system that for me was the foundation of these different presentations, and to make everyone interested in this matter acquainted with views which until now were merely my own concern, or perhaps shared with a few others. One who understands this system as I now present it, who subsequently has the desire and the means to compare it with those early presentations; who further perceives how many preliminaries were necessary to prepare for the complete and certain exposition that I believe I can now provide, will find it natural rather than blameworthy that I first produced those preliminaries versions; working from wholly different sides, I sought to prepare for the integral reception of this philosophy, which I have the audacity to regard as the one and only Philosophy, before I dared bring it forward in its entirety. Under these circumstances, no one should think (as was occasionally imagined when I presented this system in lectures the past winter) that I have altered my system of philosophy: for the system that appears here for the first time in its fully characteristic shape is the same one that I always had in view in the different [earlier] presentations, and that I continually used as my personal guide-star in both transcendental and natural philosophy. I never concealed from myself or from others the fact that I take neither what I term “transcendental philosophy” nor what I term “philosophy of nature,” each in isolation, to be the system of philosophy itself, but instead I have announced in the clearest terms in the Preface to my *System of [Transcendental] Idealism*, in many places in this journal, etc., that I regarded each of them as nothing more than a one-sided presentation of that system. If there were readers and critics who were not aware of this fact, or for whom such announcements gave no

clue to my real intention, this is not my fault, but theirs, nor is it my fault that [my] vocal protest against the way idealism is usually exhibited, which has existed since [I started work on] the philosophy of nature, has to date been noticed only by the sharp-sighted Eschenmayer,²⁸ while it has been tolerated even by the idealists themselves. —I have always presented what I called philosophy of nature and transcendental philosophy as the opposite poles of philosophical activity; with the present exposition I situate myself at the indifference-point [between them], where only the person who has previously constructed [philosophy] from completely antithetical directions can correctly and confidently place himself. —For most people faced with the task of assessing a philosophical system, nothing more pleasant can happen than that they are given a single word which they believe has the power to fetter and arbitrarily confine their mind. If I should say, however, that this present system is “idealism,” or “realism,” or even some third combination of them, in each case I might say nothing false, for this system could be any of these, depending on how it is viewed (what it might be in itself, abstracted from any particular “view,” would remain undecided), but by doing so I would bring no one to a real understanding of this system, for what idealism or realism might be, or some possible third position compounded from the two, is by no means clear or obvious, but something still to be decided; and different minds attach quite different ideas to these expressions. I do not wish to anticipate the point in the following presentation where this matter will of itself come up for discussion, but only to make some preliminary remarks. It is self-evident, e.g., that I take as the actually elaborated system of idealism only what I have expounded under that name, for if I took idealism to be anything else, I would have expounded this alternative; therefore, I give “idealism” no other meaning than what I have given it in that presentation.²⁹ Now it might very well have been the case, e.g., that the idealism which Fichte first advanced and which he still maintains had a meaning completely different than this; Fichte, e.g., might have conceived idealism in a completely subjective sense while I, on the other hand, conceived it in an objective one; Fichte might have maintained an idealism relative to the standpoint of reflection, whereas I situated myself and the principle of idealism at the standpoint of production: to put this contrast in the most intelligible terms, if idealism in the subjective sense said that the I is everything, idealism in the objective sense would be forced to say the reverse: everything is = I, which are doubtless different views, although no one will deny that both are idealistic. —I do not say that this is really how things stand; I merely pose the possibility; but supposing this is the case, the reader will learn from the word “idealism” simply nothing about the genuine content of a system expounded under this name; rather, to the extent one is interested in the matter one must resolve to study it and only then examine what is understood or properly asserted by this term. The situation may be no different for what used to be called “realism” than it is for idealism, and it seems

to me, as I hope the following presentation proves, that until now realism in its most sublime and perfect form (in Spinozism, I mean) has been thoroughly misconstrued and misunderstood in all the slanted opinions of it that have become public knowledge. I say all this only to this end, first, that the reader who wishes to become informed about my philosophy resolve at the start to read the following presentation with quiet consideration, not as the recital of something already known (in which case only the form of exposition might be of interest), but as something still entirely unfamiliar;—everyone is at liberty afterwards to assure himself that he has long thought the same things;—and I especially request that one criticize as philosophy of nature only what I designate “philosophy of nature,” as the system of idealism only what I call the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, but that one decide to learn my “system of philosophy” solely from what follows; secondly, I request that one form an opinion of my presentations of natural philosophy and of idealism, but especially of the following presentation of my system of philosophy, solely from those texts themselves, not from other expositions, that one ask not whether this presentation agrees with that exposition, but whether it agrees with itself and whether it has warrant³⁰ or not, considered in itself and entirely abstracted from everything that exists outside it; I especially hope that the reader will resolve provisionally to consider Fichte’s system and my presentation independently, since only through a further development can it appear whether and to what degree the two are, and have been, in agreement all along. I say *provisionally*, since I think it is impossible that we will not eventually come to agreement, even if now, at least in my opinion, this point has not been reached.³¹ —But then would any educated person believe that a system of this sort develops instantaneously, as it were, or that it has already attained its complete development? Have people given Fichte the time to reach the point where he must decide that his system is not just idealism in general (since in my view, all true speculative philosophy is this) but precisely this idealism [which I present]? —I think Fichte has until now achieved only the most general results. Some people may be pleased and others irritated that I consider what has been done up to this point as only the beginning of what will be done, and that the whole matter is therefore far from its “end.” How could this development of which I speak be more effectively delayed than by the eagerness of idle people who, by nature quite remote from the faintest idea of speculation, nonetheless voice their opinion on these matters with the blindest possible self-confidence and who voice either their agreement or disagreement before they have even grasped what the discussion is about? Where must it end when, e.g., Reinhold declares with most naive candor that he “has never understood, either in the beginning or in the middle, not even shortly before the end (he says *end*) what was the real issue in the latest philosophical revolution”³²? Where must it end when such a person—who in the beginning of this “Revolution” was a blind follower of Kant, then in a theory of his own

making proclaimed infallible, catholic philosophy, and toward the end gave himself over to the bosom of the *Wissenschaftslehre* (with an equally strenuous protestation of his deepest conviction)—when such a person, after all these proofs of philosophical imbecility, does not lack the courage to again (and as he himself surmises, for the last time) prophesy the “present” end of the philosophical revolution?^a —We avert our gaze from these sights and for the moment recall only this: all further clarifications of the relation of our system to any other, especially to Spinozism and to idealism, are to be sought in the following presentation itself. I hope this presentation will also put an end to all misunderstandings [of my work]; the philosophy of nature was especially plagued by them; as I remarked in an essay in the previous issue, since it should have been self-evident that a “*First Sketch*” could contain no finished system,³³ I have for many years thought it better to remedy these misunderstandings by completing the system than by a preliminary general discussion. Accordingly, I shall no longer pay the least attention to any critical judgment that does not engage me

a. For anyone with a sense of science what we said in the text will be adequate to justify our opinion of Herr Reinhold; we are bold to express it because privately we never had the least respect for him as a philosophical mind—he never was one and he has, indirectly at least, given up all claim to the title. He condemns himself to always be the schoolboy and plays the disciple to the point of absurdity; on this score he has really made the grade. He never had anything more than a historical mind for philosophy: He advanced his theory of the faculty of presentation on the basis of Kantian philosophy (which it notoriously assumes to be true). Since from its viewpoint, presentation [*Vorstellung*] is just a fact, naturally nothing more than a factual deduction of it is possible. Since this first and singular expression of his own philosophical activity, Reinhold has had nothing more important to do than, with the appearance of every new philosophy, conduct yet another review of all previous philosophers: spiritualists, materialists, theists, and whatever else they may be called, and happily always pinpoint their failings, but never recognize his own or see how useless his attempt to thresh the noble ancient grain along with his straw was—a delusion surpassed only by his belief that he has solved the major problems of philosophy with the principles of matter and form, or of the presenting and the presented [elements of consciousness]. Since he has continued to live in profound ignorance of the authentic core of all speculation, naturally nothing seems too grand for his power of judgment. But if this feeble mind takes on Spinoza or Plato or criticizes other worthy figures of philosophy, it is surprising that he seems to omit Fichte from this critical survey, and that he does so just as easily as he recently seemed to have understood Fichte and have become deeply convinced of the truth of his philosophy. Honesty will not permit me to intentionally distort isolated philosophical assertions that are as candid as the confession [of ignorance] cited above; otherwise I might take the mutilations that some of my assertions have suffered in a certain review of my *System of Transcendental Idealism* seriously. I shall certainly not waste my time on the matter, but instead formally invite Herr Reinhold to say whatever he thinks appropriate of me in reviews, journals, etc., moreover, to help himself to my ideas and to my method as a “heuristic” principle (which should be of good use), even to idealism, if he feels it necessary for the honor of truth and “the end” of the philosophical revolution to refute ideas (even ones derived from him), once they have been made suitably absurd. But what will people say when this Reinholdism spreads all the way to explicit denunciations or to attacks from moral and religious quarters, as happened in the latest issue of *Neuer Teutscher Merkur*? Surely one will see here again only the temperament described above and see fit to apply the golden word of [Schiller’s and Goethe’s] *Xenien*:

I never quarrel with sensitive people:
Bad company comes of it, at the first opportunity.

over first principles, here expressed for the first time, and that fails either to attack these or to deny what necessarily follows from particular statements derived from them. —The method that I have employed in the construction of this system will permit more detailed discussion at the end of the whole presentation than at the beginning.³⁴ Concerning the manner of exposition, I have taken Spinoza as a model here, since I thought there was good reason to choose as a paradigm the philosopher whom I believed came nearest my system in terms of content or material and in form,³⁵ but I also adopted this model because this form of exposition allowed the greatest brevity of presentation and the most accurate assessment of the certainty of demonstrations.³⁶ —I have made quite frequent use besides of a general symbolic notation that was previously employed by Herr Eschenmayer in his essays on natural philosophy and the article “Deduction des lebenden Organism” (in *Röschlaub’s Magazine &c.*).³⁷ I wish all my readers would read these essays, partly for their own intrinsic interest, partly because it would put them in a more secure position to compare my system of nature-philosophy and the sort of natural philosophy produced by an idealism which, though produced quite necessarily, merely occupies the standpoint of reflection.³⁸ For to grasp in its core the System of Identity which I advance here, which is wholly removed from the standpoint of reflection, it is extremely useful to become closely acquainted with the system of reflection that is its antithesis, since reflection works only from oppositions and rests on oppositions. Generally speaking, with this system I take a double stance, [first] towards the philosophers of previous and contemporary times and [secondly,] towards empirical physicists. As for the philosophers, I have partially explained this point in this preface; a comprehensive explanation will occur in the presentation itself; it is superfluous to remark besides that by “philosophers” I understand only those who possess principles and method, who do not merely repeat the thoughts of others or cook up a strange stew from different scraps and tidbits; as for the physicists, one can predict their reaction to the philosophy of nature beforehand. By far the greater number of them will continue to fight the inevitable; so they speak of gradually accepting the constructions of philosophy of nature as probable explanations or confirming them by experiments, or even of finally immortalizing the whole of dynamic physics in their textbooks as a pretty good hypothesis.

This may suffice for an author’s statement. From this point on, the subject-matter alone speaks.

§ 1. DEFINITION. I call *reason* absolute reason, or reason insofar as it is conceived as the total indifference of the subjective and objective.

It is not the place here to justify this turn of speech, since its only function is to generally awaken the idea that I shall connect with this word. —Just a

brief indication must be given, then, of how one comes to understand reason this way. One gets there by reflecting on what presents itself in philosophy [as occupying a position] between the subjective and the objective, which evidently must be an item standing indifferently over against both extremes. The thought of reason is foreign to everyone; to conceive it as absolute, and thus to come to the standpoint I require, one must abstract from what does the thinking. For the one who performs this abstraction reason immediately ceases to be something subjective, as most people imagine it; it can of course no longer be conceived as something objective either, since an objective something or a thought item becomes possible only in contrast to a thinking something, from which there is complete abstraction here; reason, therefore, becomes the true *in-itself* through this abstraction, which is located precisely in the indifference-point of the subjective and the objective.

The standpoint of philosophy is the standpoint of reason, its kind of knowing is a knowing of things as they are in themselves, i.e., as they are in reason. It is the nature of philosophy to completely suspend all succession and externality, all difference of time and everything which mere imagination³⁹ mingles with thought, in a word, to see in things only that aspect by which they express absolute reason, not insofar as they are objects of reflection, which is subject to the laws of mechanism and has duration in time.

§ 2. *Outside reason is nothing, and in it is everything.* If reason is conceived as we have demanded in § 1, one immediately becomes aware that nothing could be outside it. For if one supposes that there *is* something outside it, then either it *is* for-itself outside of reason and is then the subjective, which is contrary to the assumption, or it *is* not for-itself outside reason and so stands to this something-outside-it as objective item to objective item, and is therefore objective, but this again is contrary to the assumption (§ 1).

Therefore nothing is outside reason, and everything is in it.

Remark. There is no philosophy except from the standpoint of the absolute, throughout this presentation, no hesitation on this matter will be entertained: reason is the absolute to the extent that it is conceived just as we determined it (§ 1); the present proposition, accordingly, is valid only under this assumption.

Explanation. All objections to this view could only refer to the situation that one is accustomed to viewing things not as they are in reason, but only as they appear. Therefore, we do not tarry with their refutation, since in what follows we must prove that everything that *is*, is in essence equal to reason and is one with it. The proposition as formulated would need of no proof or even explanation but would instead rank as an axiom, if so many people were not entirely unaware that there could be nothing at all outside reason unless reason posited it outside itself, reason never does this, however, only a false employment of reason which is joined to an inability to make the abstraction demanded above and to forget the subjective⁴⁰ element in itself.

§ 3. *Reason is simply one and simply self-identical.* Were this not so, the being of reason would require some additional ground other than reason itself: since reason itself contains only the ground that it is, not that some other reason would be; reason would not be absolute, which is contrary to the assumption. *Reason is therefore one in an absolute sense.* But if one supposes the reverse of the second clause, namely that reason is not self-identical, then that in virtue of which it is not identical to itself must still be posited in it, and, since *outside* it (*praeter ipsam*) there is nothing (§ 2), this other factor must therefore express the essence of reason, and since, moreover, everything is *in-itself* only in virtue of its capacity to express the essence of reason (§ 1), this other factor too, considered in itself or in reference to reason, would again be equal to reason, united with it. *Reason is therefore one* (not only *ad extra*, but also *ad intra*, or) in itself, i.e., it is simply self-identical.

§ 4. The ultimate law for the being of reason, and, since there is nothing outside reason (§ 2), for all being (because it is comprehended within reason) is the law of identity, which with respect to all being is expressed by $A = A$.

The proof follows immediately from § 3 and the propositions that precede it.

Corollary 1. By all other laws, accordingly, if there are such, nothing is determined as it is in reason or in itself, but only as it is for reflection or in appearance.

Cor. 2. The proposition $A = A$ is the sole truth posited *in itself*, hence without any reference to time. I designate such a truth an eternal truth, not in an empirical but in an absolute sense.

§ 5. *Definition.* I call the A of the first position the subject, to differentiate it from that of the second, the predicate.

§ 6. The proposition $A = A$, conceived universally, says neither that A on its own *is*, nor that it is as subject *or* predicate. Instead, *the unique being posited through this proposition is that of **identity itself**, which accordingly is posited in complete independence from A as subject and from A as predicate. The proof of the first assertion is furnished in the *Wissenschaftslehre* § 1; the second part of the proposition follows of itself from the first and is contained within it. Since abstraction is made from the being of A in its own right, and also from its status as subject and predicate, the sole thing remaining from which abstraction cannot be made, which is therefore really posited in this proposition, is absolute identity itself.*⁴¹

§ 7. *The sole unconditioned cognition is that of absolute identity.* Since it alone expresses the *essence* of reason (§ 3), the proposition $A = A$ is also the unique unconditionally certain proposition (§ 4, Corollary 2), but absolute identity is also posited through this proposition (§ 6). Therefore [its cognition] is etc.

Remark. The preceding series of statements was advanced merely to show the unconditioned character of this cognition. For this cognition *itself* is not really proven, precisely because it is unconditioned.

§ 8. *Absolute identity simply IS and is as certain as the proposition $A = A$ is.* Proof. Because it is immediately posited along with this proposition (§ 6).

Corollary 1. Absolute identity cannot be conceived except through the proposition $A = A$, yet it is posited through this proposition as *standing in being*. Therefore it *is* by virtue of being thought, and *it belongs to the essence of absolute identity to be*.

Cor. 2. *The being of absolute identity is an eternal truth*, since the truth of its being is equivalent to the truth of the proposition $A = A$. But [the proposition $A = A$] is [the sole truth that is in itself] (§ 4, Cor. 2) etc.

§ 9. *Reason is one with absolute identity.* The proposition $A = A$ is reason's law of being (§ 4). Now by means of this proposition absolute identity is also immediately posited as standing in being (§ 6), and since the being of absolute identity is identical with its essence (§ 8, Corollary 1), reason is also (§ 1) one with absolute identity itself, not only in being but in essence.

Cor. Therefore the being of reason (in the sense defined in § 1) *is just as unconditioned* as that of absolute identity, or: **BEING** *belongs equally to the essence of reason and to that of absolute identity*. The proof follows immediately from the preceding.

§ 10. *Absolute identity is simply infinite.* —For if it were finite, then the ground of its finitude would lie either in itself or not in itself, outside it; in the first case, it would be the cause of some determination in itself, hence something simultaneously causing and caused, and therefore not absolute identity; in the second case, the ground of its finitude would be outside it. But there is nothing outside it. For if there were something outside it by which it might be limited, it would have to be related to this outside something as objective item to objective item. But this is absurd (§ 1). Therefore just as surely as it *is*, is it infinite, i.e., it is simply infinite.

§ 11. *Absolute identity can never be abolished AS identity.* For it belongs to its essence to be, but it *is* only because it is absolute identity (§ 6, 8, Cor. 1). Therefore it can never be abolished as such, for otherwise being would necessarily cease to belong to its essence, i.e., something contradictory would be posited. Therefore, etc.

§ 12. *Everything that is, is absolute identity itself.* Since identity is infinite and can never be abolished as absolute identity (§ 10, 11), everything that is must be absolute identity itself.

Cor. 1. *Everything that is, is in itself one.* This proposition is merely the inversion of the preceding one, and so follows immediately from it.

Cor. 2. Absolute identity is the unique item that absolutely is or is *in itself*; so everything is in itself only to the extent it is absolute identity itself, and to the extent that it is not absolute identity itself, it is simply not *in itself*.

§ 13. *With respect to being in itself, nothing has come into being.* For everything that subsists in itself is absolute identity itself (§ 12). This, however,

has not entered into being, but simply is; therefore it is posited without any connection to time and outside all time, for its being is an eternal truth (§ 8, Cor. 2). Consequently, everything viewed as being in itself is absolutely eternal.

§ 14. *Nothing, considered intrinsically, is finite.* The proof is drawn from § 10 in the same way as that of the preceding proposition.

Cor. It follows that from the standpoint of reason (§ 1) there is no finitude, and that considering things as finite is precisely the same as not considering them as they are in themselves. —To the same extent, to consider things as differentiated or multiple means not to consider them *in themselves* or from the standpoint of reason.

Explanation. The most basic mistake of all philosophy is to assume that absolute identity has actually stepped outside itself and to attempt to make intelligible how this emergence occurs. Absolute identity has surely never ceased being identity, and everything that is, is considered in itself—not just the appearance of absolute identity, but *identity itself*, and since, further, it is the nature of philosophy to consider things as they are in themselves (§ 1), i.e., insofar as they are infinite and are absolute identity itself (§ 14, 12), true philosophy consists in the demonstration that absolute identity (the infinite) has not stepped outside itself and that everything that is, insofar as it is, is infinity itself—a proposition that Spinoza alone of all previous philosophers acknowledged, even if he did not fully carry out its demonstration, nor express it clearly enough to avoid being misunderstood ever after.

§ 15. *Absolute identity IS only under the form of the proposition $A = A$* , or this form is immediately posited through its being. Because it *is* in a simply unconditioned way and cannot be in a conditioned way, unconditioned being can be posited only under the form of this proposition (§ 8). Therefore this form is immediately posited along with the being of absolute identity, and there is here no transition, no before and after, but absolute simultaneity of being and of form itself.

Cor. 1. *Whatever is posited along with the form of the proposition $A = A$ is also immediately posited with the being of absolute identity itself,⁴² though it belongs not to its essence but only to the form or mode of its being.* The proof for the first part of the proposition follows directly from the preceding one. The second part of the proposition is proved as follows. The form of the proposition $A = A$ is determined by the character of A as subject and A as object. But absolute identity is posited in this very proposition independently of A as subject and A as predicate (§ 6). So too, whatever is posited along with the form of this proposition belongs not to absolute identity itself, but merely to the mode or form of its being.

Cor. 2. *Whatever belongs merely to the form of being of absolute identity, but not to identity itself, is not posited in itself.* This is because only absolute identity itself is *in its essence* posited in itself. Therefore etc.

§ 16. *Between the A that is posited as subject in $A = A$, and the A that is posited as predicate (§ 5), no intrinsic opposition is possible.* For as far as both subject and predicate are, they belong not to the essence, but only to the being of absolute identity, but as far as they belong to the essence of absolute identity,⁴³ they cannot be conceived as different. There is therefore no intrinsic opposition between the two.

Cor. 1. One and the same complete A is posited in the position of the subject and that of the predicate.

Cor. 2. *Absolute identity IS only under the form of an identity of identity.* This is so because absolute identity is only under the form of the proposition $A = A$ (§ 15), and this form is posited along with its being. In the proposition $A = A$, however, the same thing is equated with itself, i.e., an identity of identity is posited. So absolute identity is only as the identity of an identity, and this is the form of its being, inseparable from its being itself.

§ 17. *There is an original cognition of absolute identity and this is posited immediately with the proposition $A = A$.* This is so because there is a cognition of identity as such (§ 7). Now if there is nothing outside absolute identity, this cognition is within absolute identity itself. But this cognition does not immediately follow from its essence, for from its essence it follows only that identity *is*. It must immediately follow from its being, therefore, and so belong to its form of being (§ 15, Cor. 1). But the form of its being is as primordial as this being itself, and just as primordial is everything posited along with this form (ibid.). Hence there is an original cognition of absolute identity, and since this belongs to its form of being, it is directly and immediately posited with the proposition $A = A$.⁴⁴

§ 18. *Everything that is, considered absolutely and in itself, is in essence absolute identity, but in its form of being, it is a cognizing of absolute identity.* The first part of this proposition follows from § 12, the second from § 17. For if cognition of absolute identity belongs directly to the form of its being, and this form is inseparable from its being, then everything that is, is with respect to its form of being a cognition of absolute identity.

Cor. 1. The original cognition of absolute identity is therefore also its *being* according to form,⁴⁵ and, conversely, every being is in its formal aspect a cognizing—(not a being-cognized)—of absolute identity.

Cor. 2. There is no primitive item cognized,⁴⁶ but cognizing is original *being* itself, considered in its form.

§ 19. *Absolute identity IS only under the form of cognizing its identity with itself.* This is because its cognizing is as primordial as its form of being (§ 18), indeed it is its very form of being (ibid., Cor. 1). This form, however, is that of an identity of identity (§ 16, Cor. 2). Now if there is no identity outside it, then its cognizing is strictly a cognizing of its self-identity, and since it is

only under the form of cognizing, so it is only under the form of cognizing its self-identity.

Cor. The entirety of what is, is in itself, or considered in its essence, absolute identity; considered in its form of being, the whole is the self-cognizing of absolute identity in its identity. —This follows immediately [from the above].

§ 20. *The self-cognizing of absolute identity in its identity is infinite.*

For self-cognizing is the form of its being.⁴⁷ But its being is infinite (§ 10). So this cognizing is also an infinite one.⁴⁸

§ 21. *Absolute identity cannot cognize itself infinitely without infinitely positing itself as subject and object.* This proposition is self-evident.

§ 22. *It is the same identical absolute identity that, with respect to its form of being, if not with respect to its essence, is posited as subject and object.* This is so because absolute identity's form of being is the same as the form of the proposition $A = A$. In this proposition, however, one and the same entire A is posited in the position of the subject and that of the predicate (§ 16, *Cor.* 1). There is, therefore, one and the same identity which according to its form of being is posited as subject and object. Further, since it is only with respect to the form of its being that it is posited as subject and object,⁴⁹ it is not so posited in itself, i.e., with respect to its essence.⁵⁰

Cor. In itself⁵¹ no opposition occurs between subject and predicate.

§ 23. *Between subject and predicate,⁵² none other than quantitative difference is possible.*⁵³ For 1) any qualitative difference between the two is unthinkable. —*Proof.* Absolute identity *is*, independent of A as subject and object (§ 6), and it *is* equally unconditioned in both. Now since it is the same equal absolute identity that is posited as subject and object, there is no qualitative difference. Consequently, there remains 2) since there is no possible difference between the two in terms of being itself (because they are equally unconditioned as s.[ubject] and o.[b]ject], thus the same in essence), there remains only a quantitative difference, i.e., one that obtains with respect to the *magnitude* of being, such that the same identity is posited [as subject and object], but with a predominance of subjectivity⁵⁴ or objectivity.⁵⁵

Explanation. We ask the reader to follow us in this proof with at least the provisional trust that it will become perfectly intelligible after one simply forgets previously obtained ideas, especially those of the customary concepts *subjective* and *objective*, and thinks in each proposition exactly and only what we wish thought, a suggestion which we make here, once and for all. This much at least is clear to everyone at the start, that we admit no opposition between subject and object (since what is posited in the one position and in the other is the very same identity; subject and object are thus in essence one), but perchance just some sort of difference between subjectivity and objectivity, which since they pertain to the form of being of absolute identity, belong to the form of

every being, perhaps not in an identical way, but subsisting together in such a way that they can be alternately posited as predominant—all of which we do not yet assert here, but only advance as a possible conception. For the sake of greater clarity, we add the following remark. Since the same A is posited in the predicate and in the subject position in the proposition $A = A$, doubtless there is posited between the two utterly no difference at all, but an absolute indifference of the two, and difference, and consequently discriminability of two, would become possible only if either predominant subjectivity or predominant objectivity were posited, in which case $A = A$ would have changed into $A = B$ (B is adopted as a designation for objectivity); now either this factor or its opposite might be the predominant one, but in either case, difference commences.⁵⁶ If we express this predominance of subjectivity or objectivity by the exponent of the subjective factor, it follows that if $A = B$ is posited, there is also conceived a positive or negative power of A, so that $A^0 = B$ must be the case just as much as $A = A$ ⁵⁷ itself, i.e., it must be the expression of absolute indifference. Difference is simply not to be understood in any other way than this.

§ 24. *The form of subjectivity-objectivity IS not ACTU⁵⁸ unless a quantitative difference of the two is posited.*

Proof. This is so because it is not actualized if subjectivity and objectivity *as such* are not posited. But since the two cannot be posited as such, they might still be posited with quantitative difference (§ 23).⁵⁹ Thus the form of subjectivity-objectivity is not actualized or really posited unless quantitative difference is posited between the two.

§ 25. *With respect to absolute identity NO quantitative difference is conceivable.*

Since this identity is identical (§ 9) to the absolute indifference of the subjective and the objective (§ 1), neither the one nor the other can be discriminated within it.

Cor. Quantitative difference is possible only *outside of* absolute identity.

This proposition is just the inversion of the preceding one; it is certain, even if there is nothing except absolute identity.

§ 26. *Absolute identity is absolute totality.* —Because it is itself everything that is, or, it cannot be conceived as separated from everything that is (§ 12). It *is*, therefore, only as everything, i.e., it is absolute totality.

Definition. I call absolute totality the universe.

Cor. Quantitative difference is possible only outside absolute totality. This proposition follows directly from § 26 and 25, Cor. 1.

§ 27. *Definition.* What exists outside totality I designate in this context an **INDIVIDUAL** being or thing.

§ 28. *There is no individual being or individual thing in ITSELF.* For the unique *in-itself* is absolute identity (§ 8). But this is only as totality (§ 26).⁶⁰

Remark. There *is* also nothing in itself outside totality, and if something is viewed outside the totality, this happens only by an arbitrary separation of

the individual from the whole which is effected by reflection. But in itself this separation simply does not happen, since everything that is, is one (§ 12 Cor. 1) and is absolute identity itself inside the totality (§ 26).

§ 29. *Quantitative difference between subjectivity and objectivity is conceivable only in reference to individual being, but not in itself, or in light of the absolute totality.* —The first part of the proposition follows directly from § 27 and 26, Cor., the second part from 25 and 26.

§ 30. *If quantitative difference in fact occurs in the perspective of the individual thing, then, to the extent that it is, absolute identity is to be understood as the quantitative indifference of subjectivity and objectivity.* The proof follows immediately from the proposition that absolute identity is absolute totality (§ 26).⁶¹

Explanation. Expressed in the clearest way possible, our assertion is *this*, that if we could view everything that is in the totality, we would perceive in the whole a perfect quantitative balance of subjectivity and objectivity,⁶² hence nothing else than a pure identity in which nothing is distinguishable, however much in the perspective of the individual a preponderance might occur on one side or the other, that therefore we would perceive that precisely this quantitative difference is in no way posited *in itself*, but only in appearance. For since absolute identity—that which simply *is* and is in all [—] is not in any way affected by the opposition of subjectivity and objectivity (§ 6), the quantitative difference of these two cannot happen with respect to absolute identity or in itself, and the things or appearances that appear to us as different are not truly different, but are *realiter*⁶³ one, so that all things together, though none for itself, display clear unclouded identity itself inside the totality in which primordially opposed potencies cancel each other out. This identity, however, is not produced, but original identity, and it is only produced [in the totality] because it *is*. Therefore it already is in everything that is. The power that bursts forth in the stuff of nature is the same in essence as that which displays itself in the world of mind, except that it has to contend there with a surplus of the real, here with one of the ideal, but even this opposition, which is not an opposition in essence, but in mere potency, appears as opposition only to one who finds himself outside indifference, who fails to view absolute identity itself as primary and original.⁶⁴ It appears as a produced identity only to the one who has separated himself from the whole, and to the extent he isolates himself; to one who has not withdrawn from the absolute center of gravity, it is *the first being*, the being that never was produced but is if anything at all is; it is to such a degree that even the individual being is possible only inside it, while outside it, apart from things separated in mere thought, there is really and truly nothing. But how is it possible for anything to separate itself from this absolute totality or be separated from it in thought, is a question that cannot yet be answered here, since in its stead we prove that such a separation

is intrinsically impossible, that it is false from the standpoint of reason, indeed (as can readily be seen) the source of all errors.

§ 31. *Absolute identity is only under the form of quantitative indifference of the subjective and the objective.*⁶⁵

Remark. What was asserted merely conditionally in the preceding proposition is here asserted absolutely.

Proof. This is so because absolute identity **IS** only under the form of subject-objectivity (§ 22). This form *is* not *actu* unless quantitative difference is posited outside totality (§ 24), though inside totality, therefore within absolute identity (§ 26), quantitative indifference is posited (§ 25). Consequently, absolute identity *is* only under the form of the quantitative indifference of the subjective and the objective.

§ 32. *Absolute identity is not cause of the universe, but the universe itself.* For everything that *is*, is absolute identity itself (§ 12). But the universe is everything that is, etc.⁶⁶

Remark. The long and profound ignorance about this principle will perhaps excuse our dwelling a while longer on this proof that absolute identity is the universe itself and that it cannot be under any other form than that of the universe. This may be especially necessary for those who stand so firm and hardened, as it were, in common sense beliefs that they cannot be torn away from them by philosophical argument (the taste for which they lack). I am nonetheless convinced that everyone will be persuaded of this proposition when he reads over the following propositions attentively and sees that they have been irrefutably proven, to wit: 1) that absolute identity is only under the form of the proposition $A = A$, and that, since it is, so too is this form. 2) that this form is *primordial*, therefore linked with the absolute identity of subject and object.⁶⁷ 3) that identity cannot be *actual* (*actu*) under this form—it is assumed it is, since absolute identity is *actu* merely because it is *potential*⁶⁸—unless the indifference expressed in the proposition $A = A$ is quantitative.⁶⁹ 4) that this quantitative indifference can *be* only under the form of absolute totality, thus, of the universe, that accordingly absolute identity, insofar as it is (*exists*) must be the universe itself.

§ 33. *The universe is equally eternal with absolute identity itself.* For it *is* only as universe (§ 32). Identity *is* eternal, so the universe is equally eternal with it.

Remark. We may with full justification say that absolute identity is itself the universe, but the converse, that the universe is absolute identity, is to be said only under a restriction: it is absolute identity considered in its essence *and* in its form of being.

§ 34. *Absolute identity is in essence the same in every part of the universe;* for in *essence*, it is completely independent of A as subject and as object (§ 6), consequently also independent of all quantitative difference (§ 24), and so the same in every *part* of the universe.

Cor. 1. The essence of absolute identity is indivisible. —For the same reason. —So too, whatever else may be divided into parts, absolute identity is never partitioned.⁷⁰

Cor. 2. Nothing that *is* can be negated in its being. For it cannot be negated without absolute identity ceasing to *be*; since of course identity *simply* is without any reference to quantity, it would simply cease to be if it could be abolished even in some part of the whole, since it would be just as improper (if we can use the expression) to negate it in the part as to do so in the whole, in the negation of the part, it would be abolished as such. Accordingly, it is impossible that anything that *is* be negated in its being.

§ 35. *Nothing individual has the ground of its existence in itself.* —For otherwise its being would necessarily follow from its essence. But everything is identical in essence (§ 12, Cor. 1). Therefore the essence of an individual thing cannot contain the ground that it is as this individual. It is therefore not through itself that it is as this thing.

§ 36. *Each individual being is determined through another individual being.*⁷¹ Because *as* an individual being it is neither determined through itself, since it does not subsist in itself and does not contain the ground of its being (§ 35), nor through absolute identity, since this contains only the ground of totality and of being, to the extent it is comprehended in totality, it can therefore be determined only through another individual being, which again is determined through another, and so on without end.

Cor. So too there is no individual being which is not as such a determined entity, consequently a limited one.

§ 37. *Quantitative difference of the subjective and the objective is the ground of all finitude, and conversely, the quantitative indifference of the two is infinitude.*

As for the first part, quantitative difference is the ground of all individual being (§ 29), consequently of all finitude as well (§ 36). The second part follows of itself from the first.

Expl. The general expression for the ground of all finitude is $A = B$ (according to § 23, Expl.).

§ 38. *Each individual being is as such a determined form of the being of absolute identity, but not its very being, which is only in totality.*

This is because every individual and finite being is posited through a quantitative difference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity] (§ 37), which again is determined through another individual being, i.e., through another determinate quantitative difference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity]. —Now since s.[ubjectivity]-and- o.[bjectivity] is as such absolute identity's form of being (§ 22), the determinate quantitative difference of the two is a determinate form of the being of absolute identity. But for that very reason it is not identity's being *itself*, which *is* only in quantitative indifference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity], i.e., in totality.

Cor. Proposition § 36 can therefore also be expressed this way: Each individual being is determined through absolute identity, not insofar as it simply is, but only insofar as it *is* under the form of a determinate quantitative difference between A and B, which difference is again determined in the same way, and so on without end.⁷²

Remark 1. It might be asked why this precise relation proceeds [indefinitely or] or to the infinite. We reply: it holds between all subsequent [members of the series] for the same reason it obtains between the first and second, since of course a first point can never be specified where absolute identity has passed over into an individual thing, because it is not the individual but totality that is primordial, so that, if the series [of determinations] did not reach back without end, the individual thing would not be incorporated into totality, but would have to be for-itself as an individual thing, which is absurd.

Remark 2. From this it also follows that the law of this relation is not applicable to the absolute totality itself, that it therefore falls outside the principle $A = A$. But nothing is determined by all the laws of reflection⁷³ as it is *in* itself or in reason (§ 4, Cor. 1); and so the same holds too for this relationship, and vice versa.

§ 39. *Absolute identity is in the individual under the same form under which it is in the whole; conversely, it is in the whole under no other form than the one under which it is in the individual.*

Proof. Absolute identity is also in the individual, since every individual is but a determinate form of its being, and it is *entirely* in every individual, since identity is simply indivisible (§ 34, Cor.) and can never be suspended *as* absolute identity (§ 11). Since in general it *is* only under some form, it therefore is in the individual under the same form under which it is in the whole. So too it subsists in the whole under no form other than that under which it already subsists in the individual.

Proof for the proposition can also be derived from § 19 ff. Since identity in its form of being is an infinite self-knowing, it is also subject-and-object unto infinity, in quantitative difference and indifference.

§ 40. *Each individual is certainly not absolute, but it is infinite in its kind.*⁷⁴ It is not absolutely infinite, since there is something outside it (§ 1), and it is determined in its being by something external (§ 36). It is infinite in its kind, however, or, since mode of being is determined by the quantitative difference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity] (§ 29), and since this difference is expressed in the potency of one or the other (§ 23, Expl.), it is infinite within its *potency*, for it expresses absolute identity for its potency⁷⁵ under the same form as the infinite.⁷⁶ Therefore the individual is itself infinite within the scope of its potency, even if not absolutely infinite.

§ 41. *Each individual relative to itself is a totality.* This proposition is a necessary and immediate consequence of the preceding one.

Remark. It might still be asked here what this individual is in relation to absolute totality. In this relation, however, it simply does not subsist as individual, since viewed from the standpoint of absolute totality only totality itself is and outside it is nothing. —Thus every individual is only an individual as far as it is conceived under the relationship determined by the law stated in § 36, but not in so far as it is viewed *in itself* or considered in terms of what it has in common with the infinite.

Cor. The above proposition can also be expressed this way: Every $A = B$ considered in itself or as referred to itself is an $A = A$, therefore something absolutely self-identical. —Were this not true, there would be nothing real, since everything that is, subsists only to the extent it expresses absolute identity under some determinate form of being (§ 38).

§ 42. *Definition.* I shall designate a totality a relative one insofar as it displays the individual in relation to itself. I do so not because the totality could be anything but absolute in comparison to the individual, but because it is merely relative compared to absolute totality.

Definition 2. Each determinate potency signifies a determinate quantitative difference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity] that occurs with respect to the whole or to absolute totality but which does not occur with respect to this power, so that, e.g., a negative exponent of A signifies a predominance of objectivity relative to the whole (hence with respect to A and also to B), but for that very reason, since this predominance is common to both A and B, relative to the potency itself in which the predominance occurs a perfect balance of the two elements is possible, and therefore an $A = B$ is an $A = A$.⁷⁷

Remark. We ask the reader to pay close attention to this definition, since through it alone will he be put in a position to appreciate the full interconnection of what follows.

§ 43. *Absolute identity is only under the form of all the potencies.*

This proposition follows directly from definition 2, § 42, taken together with the proposition that absolute identity *is* only as the quantitative indifference of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[bjectivity] (§ 31).

§ 44. *All potencies are absolutely contemporaneous.* For absolute identity is only under the form of all the potencies (§ 43). It *is* eternal, however, and without any reference to time (§ 8, Cor. 2). Therefore the potencies too are without any reference to time, simply eternal, therefore contemporaneous among themselves.⁷⁸

Remark. Since all the potencies are contemporaneous, and there is no reason to begin with one or the other of them, there is no alternative but to make the general expression of potency as such, which is $A = B$ (cf. § 23, Explanation), the object of investigation. —We take the liberty at this point of inserting several propositions that, for the sake of brevity, we leave without explicit proof [of the sort] that has been advanced elsewhere, partly in the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, partly in essays published in this journal, to

which we therefore refer anyone who is not yet acquainted with the proof and who wishes to further follow our demonstrations.

I) If it is granted that $A = B$ stands for a potency (quantitative difference relative to the whole), then in $A = B$, B is posited as that which originally *is* (hence as the real principle), A on the other hand as that which *is* not in the same sense as B, but which cognizes B, hence as ideal principle. For a closer discussion of this statement, see my *System of [Transcendental] Idealism*, page 74 and especially 84.⁷⁹ —Yet this opposition has utterly no standing in itself or from the viewpoint of speculation. For *in itself*, A has being just as much as B, because A, like B, is the whole of absolute identity (§ 22), which *exists* only under both forms, but under both equally. Since A is the knowing principle, while B, as we shall discover, is what is intrinsically unlimited or infinite extension, we have here quite precisely both the Spinozistic attributes of absolute substance, thought and extension. We do not merely think these attributes are identical *idealiter*,⁸⁰ as people commonly understand Spinoza, we think them completely identical *realiter*.⁸¹ Accordingly, nothing can be posited under the form A that is not as such and *eo ipso* also posited under the form B, and nothing can be posited under B that would not immediately also be posited under A. Thought and extension are thus never separated in anything, not even in thought and in extension, but are without exception [everywhere] together and identical.

II) If $A = B$ is generally the expression of finitude, then A is to be conceived as its *principle*.

III) B, which originally **IS**, is the simply limitable, in itself unlimited [factor in $A = B$], while A is the limiting one, and since each is *in itself* infinite, the former is to be conceived as the positive infinite, the latter as the negative, therefore opposite in tendency.⁸²

§ 45. *Neither A nor B can be posited in itself, but only one the same [identity] with predominant subjectivity as well as objectivity and the quantitative indifference of the two.*⁸³

Proof. There is nothing in itself outside absolute identity (§ 8), but the latter is posited unto infinity under the form of s.[ubjectivity] and o.[b]jectivity⁸⁴ (§ 21 ff.), therefore, unto infinity (e.g., in some single part) neither subjectivity nor objectivity can be posited for itself, so when quantitative difference ($A = B$) is posited, it is only under the form of the predominance of one factor over the other, and this occurs equally in the whole and in the part (§ 39). But there is no reason that one should be posited as predominant over the other. Therefore both must be posited as predominant simultaneously, and this again is inconceivable without the two reducing their opposition to quantitative indifference. Therefore neither A nor B can be posited in itself, but only the identical with predominant s.[ubjectivity] and o.[b]jectivity at the same time, and the quantitative indifference of the two.

§ 46. *Subjectivity and objectivity can be posited as predominant only in opposite tendencies or directions. It follows immediately from § 44, III.*⁸⁵

Cor. Absolute identity's form of being can thus be universally conceived through the image of a *line*

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \overset{+}{A} = B & & A = \overset{+}{B} \\ \hline A = A^{\circ} \end{array}$$

wherein the very same identity is posited in each direction, with predominant A or B in the opposite directions, while $A = A$ itself falls at the point of equilibrium. (We signify the predominance of one factor over the other with the + sign).

Explanation. For further consideration we attach some general reflections about this line.

A) The same identity is posited throughout the line, and even at $A = \overset{+}{B}$ is posited not B *in itself*, but only [that factor as] predominant. Exactly same holds for A at $\overset{+}{A} = B$.

B) What holds for the line as a whole, holds too for each individual section of it unto infinity. —*Proof.* This is because absolute identity is posited endlessly or unto infinity, and is posited endlessly under the same form (§ 39). Therefore what holds of the whole line, holds too for each part of it unto infinity.

C) Accordingly, the constructed line is divisible unto infinity, and its construction is the ground of infinite divisibility.

Remark. From this it is evident too why absolute identity is never divided (§ 34, Cor.). That is, in every section [of the line divided] there are still three points, i.e., the entire absolute identity which *is* only under this form. —But just this fact, that absolute identity is never divided, makes possible the infinite divisibility of that which is not absolute identity, which is therefore (§ 27) an individual thing.⁸⁶

D) I designate $\overset{+}{A} = B$ and $A = \overset{+}{B}$ the poles [of the constructed line], but $A = A$ the indifference-point. So each point of the line, depending on how it is viewed, is the indifference-point and -pole or its opposite [one of the end-poles]. —For since the line is infinitely divisible (C), and division is unconstrained in every direction, since the same [identity] *is* in every direction (A), then every point can also serve as indifference-point relative to some other, or become now one, now the other of the two opposed end-poles, depending on how I divide [the line].

Cor. From this it is clear: a) how the line, abstracted from the fact that I divide it (*idealiter*) is, when viewed *realiter* or in itself, absolute identity in

which there is simply nothing to divide. b) how with this line, since it is the fundamental form⁸⁷ of our entire system,⁸⁸ we never *in abstracto*⁸⁹ step outside the indifference-point.

E) The two poles may be considered as infinitely close to one another or as infinitely remote from each other. —This follows directly from the preceding propositions.

F) An infinite lengthening of this line could never produce more than these three points. —This proposition is the mere inversion of one part of the above.

§ 47. *The constructed line (§ 46, Corollary) is the form of being⁹⁰ of absolute identity in the part as in the whole.* The proof includes the above theorems from § 45 on. —This line accordingly satisfies the requirement of § 39.

§ 48. *The constructed line is the form of being of absolute identity only insofar as A and B are posited as **BEING**⁹¹ in all potencies.*⁹² —This is so because absolute identity is only under the form of A and B, that is, if A and B themselves are, then surely absolute identity is, and since identity is only under the form of all the potencies (§ 45), A and B are therefore posited as subsisting in all potencies.

Cor. The *degree* of subjectivity with which A subsists (§ 45), must therefore be entirely independent from this *being*⁹³ it has in all potencies, since the difference of potencies depends precisely on this difference of degree (§ 23, Expl.).

§ 49. *The constructed line, considered in itself, can contain the ground of no individual potency.* —Since it *is* in the whole as it is in the part (§ 47), it expresses all potencies just as it expresses a particular one.

Cor. The same holds true for the formula $A = B$, since it is the symbol for a potency as such (§ 23, Expl.).

§ 50. *The formula $A = B$ can signify a being only to the extent that A and B are both posited in it as **SUBSISTING**.*^{94,95}

Proof. This is so because every $A = B$, because it designates a being, is an $A = A$ relative to itself (§ 41, Cor.), i.e., a relative totality, but a relative totality is only what absolute identity expresses for its potency under the same form, the infinite for instance (§ 42), although absolute identity is in [a potency like] the infinite only because A and B are posited as *being* under all potencies (§ 50). So too $A = B$ signifies a **being** only to the extent that A and B are both posited as *being*.

Cor. The degree of subjectivity or objectivity with which A and B subsist is entirely independent of this being of A and B. (§ 48, Cor.).

Explanation 1. If we signify the two opposed factors of the construction⁹⁶ by A and B, then $A = B$ falls neither under A nor B, but in the indifference-point of the two. Now this indifference-point is not the absolute one, for at the latter falls $A = A$ ⁹⁷ or quantitative indifference, but in the present one $A = B$ or quantitative difference.⁹⁸ —In $A = B$, A is actual as mere cognizing, B as that which originally *is*, the former thus posited as merely ideal, the latter as real (§ 44, Remark 1). It cannot *be* this way, since A *is* as much as B (ibid.) and should be equal to it, i.e., *have being* in common with it, not just *idealiter*,

but *realiter*, and only under this condition does B too subsist. If both should equally be posited as real, a relative doubling necessarily occurs in the passage from relative identity to relative totality, yet this doubling happens only after the two are equated *realiter*. The following schema will serve to make this clear.

A		B
	1. A = B (relative identity).	
2. A		B
	(relative doubling).	
		3. A = B
		(relative totality).

The following remarks may be made about this schema: —The schema distinguishes relative identity from relative totality.⁹⁹ Absolute identity, in contrast, is also absolute totality (§ 26), for in it A and B do not subsist as different and so are not posited as ideal or real. —To the extent A = B is posited as relative identity, there is necessarily also posited a stepping out from identity on A's part, since not only is it posited as subjective but as *having being* (§ 50) or as *real*. The totality of *this schema* is caused, then, by A being posited jointly with B under B.¹⁰⁰ This A = B, in which A is posited with B as *being*, is, considered in complete isolation or in- and for-itself, really the A = A of this potency, it is A = B, i.e., predominant objectivity or subjectivity, only with respect to the whole, not in itself (§ 42, Def. 2). We request [the reader] not to disregard these remarks, for even though they primarily serve to explain our method, they are for that very reason necessary and indispensable for a basic understanding of the construction of this system. —The following will serve to clarify still more the meaning of the schema set out above. In A = B (conceived as relative identity) absolute identity is posited only generally under the form of self-cognition, from the viewpoint of the originally objective, it is *limited* by the subjective, we designate the tendency or direction in which B (as infinite extension) is limited the *outward* tendency, [and] the one alone in which A can be limited the *inward*. —Now absolute identity is posited as an infinite self-cognition (§ 19, 20); consequently there can be nothing in it (e.g., the condition of being-limited) that would not also be posited under the form of self-cognition, and this situation is necessary and must be carried forward until it is posited under the form of absolute self-cognition. So with A identity must also immediately cognize itself as limited in its subjectivity, with B as limited in its objectivity, and when this limitation is posited as mutual [in A = B], it must recognize itself in the relative totality, therefore a necessary transition from relative identity to relative totality follows directly from the infinitude of absolute identity's self-cognition.

2. Relative totality is the common reality of A and B (1). Outside absolute identity, therefore, there is posited relative to the subjective a pervasive tendency

toward being or reality. This tendency cannot subsist anymore within absolute identity itself, since there is in it utterly no opposition between the subjective and the objective, [and] in it, ultimate reality and ultimate ideality coalesce in an indivisible unity. One can say of reality therefore, though not of objectivity, that it is the predominant element in the whole series [of potencies and of individuals within potencies], since everything, even the subjective, strives toward it. —In the highest instance of reality one again finds absolute totality, absolute balance of subjectivity and objectivity.

3. Since the schema noted above is derived from the universal concept of potency ($A = B$), it is necessarily the schema of all potencies, and since, further, absolute totality is constructed only through a realization of the subjective in all potencies, just as the relative totality is constructed through a realization [of subjectivity] in the determinate potency, so must the succession of potencies follow according to this schema.

§ 51. *The first relative totality is matter.*

Proof.

a) $A = B$ is not anything real, either as relative identity or as relative doubling. —In the individual just as in the whole, $A = B$ can be expressed as identity only through the line [§ 46, Cor.]. But in this line A is everywhere posited as *having being*. Therefore this line generally presupposes $A = B$ as relative totality (§ 50, Expl. 1); relative totality is therefore the *first item presupposed*, and if relative identity is, it is only through totality.

The same thing holds for relative doubling. For since A and B can never be separated from one another, the only way relative doubling would be possible, would be that the identity of the line ACB

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \text{—————} & B \\ & C & \end{array}$$

in which A signifies the $\overset{+}{A} = B$ pole, B the $A = \overset{+}{B}$ pole, and C the indifference-point, be suspended and AC and CB be posited as different lines (under the schema of the angle $\begin{array}{c} A \\ \angle \\ C \end{array} B$, hence under form of the *first two dimensions*).

But since AC and CB are, each for itself, the whole, relative doubling presupposes relative totality just as relative identity does, and if it is, it is only through totality that it can be.

b) Relative identity and doubling are not contained *actu*, but they are still *potential* in the relative totality. —This is so because the two precede relative totality not actually, but potentially, as is evident from the deduction (§ 50, Expl. [1]).

c) The same $A = B$ therefore is simultaneously under the form of the first dimension (pure length) and the first two dimensions (length and breadth), and

it is in fact posited for itself under each form—which is contradictory. The two opposite dimensions must therefore mutually resolve themselves in a third (which here is revealed to be the condition under which A and B can be posited in relative totality). This third dimension must be of the sort that through it length and breadth are completely suspended, but nonetheless A and B come to relative difference, since otherwise (§ 37) the infinite would be produced (or infinite space, as will be shown in the sequel), therefore the third dimension must be produced in a way that A and B remain in quantitative difference. But this precise situation obtains only within matter, since this represents the third dimension under the form of individual being. *Therefore matter is relative totality* as such, and since it can be derived immediately from $A = B$ or the general expression of potency, it is the *first* relative totality or that which is posited when potency as such is posited.

Cor. Matter is the prime existent.—This follows from the proposition just proved.^b

General Remark

We have intentionally pursued *this* proof of our proposition since it is the shortest; the following additional points are what is of chief importance for this subject, 1) one must be convinced of the primordially of matter, that it is the first item presupposed. If one holds this conviction it becomes quite clear that to the extent that identity is, it subsists only as totality and also that originally nothing else is, 2) one must distinctly conceive the requirement that A and B primordially are one not just merely *idealiter*, but *realiter*, to see that this demand is met only in matter. For it is = to the requirement: if something which intrinsically moves only inward (A) is to become real, there should then be posited a real return inward, or an inner that is simultaneously an outer—such a thing exists only in what one calls the inner aspect of matter,

b. Only someone who has followed us but lacks true insight into the meaning of our system could interrupt at this point with the question, so is this system realism or idealism? One who has understood us sees that this question makes no sense whatsoever in reference to us. For us of course, there is simply nothing in itself except the absolute indifference of the real and the ideal, and only this *is* in the proper sense of the term, while everything else has being only in it and relative to it. So too matter is, but it is not as matter, but only insofar as it belongs to the being of absolute identity and expresses absolute identity for its potency. We wish to take this opportunity, which seems most appropriate, to show by the example of matter how Spinoza's three types of cognition can be displayed in our system and what meaning they have in it. The lowest stage of knowing is to regard matter as such as the real, to see in matter what it has in common with the infinite (totality, relative to itself), therefore to know it generally as nothing but totality, is the second, and finally to acknowledge that, considered absolutely, matter is simply nothing and that only absolute identity is, is the ultimate level or genuine speculative cognition. *Author's Note in original edition.*

which is equivalent to the third dimension. 3) One must think the quantitative being-positing of A and B concretely. If one assumes, e.g., that A is infinite and that it infinitely returns from B, it would be infinitely forced inward; in that case it would merely be an inner, and for that very reason also *no* inner, since this concept has standing only in opposition and opposition occurs only within quantitative difference, but never within indifference. The same thing holds if we infinitely posit B (the factor that moves outward) or, finally, if we infinitely posit both, A as well as B. There is an inner *and* an outer only within relative totality. Therefore, because matter as such is posited, it is also posited with the quantitative difference of A and B.

§ 52. *The essence of absolute identity, insofar as it is immediately the ground of reality, is power.*¹⁰¹ —This follows from the concept of power. For every immanent cause of reality is designated a power. But if absolute identity is the immediate ground of a reality, it is immanent cause as well. This is so because it is really only the immanent cause of a being (§ 32. 38, Remark 2). Therefore, etc.

§ 53. *Immediately through absolute identity A and B are posited as being or as real.* —The proof includes all previous propositions, since we have derived the fact that the prime existent (consequently also A and B) has being directly from absolute identity itself.

Cor. 1. Hence, as the immediate ground of reality of A and B, absolute identity is power or force (§ 52).

Cor. 2. A and B are the immediate ground of the reality of the prime existent,¹⁰² and since both of them are in essence equivalent to absolute identity—(since the same absolute identity is in each of them) (§ 22) both of them, A and B, are forces (§ 52).

Cor. 3. As immediate ground of the reality of the prime existent, A is attractive force, B is repulsive force. —The demonstration of this proposition is presupposed. Cf. *System of Tr[anscendental] Id[ealism]*, p. 169 ff.

§ 54. *As the immediate ground of the reality of A and B in the prime existent*¹⁰³ *absolute identity is gravitational force.*

This so because A and B, as subsisting in the pr[ime] e[xistent] and as the immanent ground of its reality, are the attractive and repulsive¹⁰⁴ forces (§ 53, Corollary 3). But the *power* by which these two are posited as *subsisting* and as the immanent ground of the reality of the pr[ime] e[xistent]¹⁰⁵ is gravity.¹⁰⁶ (For the proof, see vol. 1 of this journal, issue 2, p. 19 and 24ff.). Therefore, etc. . . .

Remark. It is quite probable that for many readers this proof still contains some obscurities. It might be asked, firstly, e.g., in what sense gravity can also be conceived as the ground of the reality of B, since this *is* primordially (§ 44, Remark 1). But B is only thought to be subsistent or objective within relative identity, while relative identity itself is nothing real (§ 51). B is therefore, like

A, *real* only insofar as it is conjointly posited as objective along with A in the relative totality. The power of gravity is thus the ground of reality of A as well as B. Then, it might seem difficult to many readers to comprehend the apparently different relations of the [attractive and repulsive] forces to absolute identity. On this point, we note just this: absolute identity is not the immediate ground of the *prime existent* as such, but only through A and B which are equal in it (§ 53, C.2). On the other hand, absolute identity is the absolutely immediate and *substantial* ground of the *real subsistence*¹⁰⁷ of A and B, but for that very reason, it is not yet *subsistent*¹⁰⁸ in the power of gravity. For gravity is only in consequence of A and B being established as subsisting. Precisely for this reason, gravity is immediately established through absolute identity; this follows not from its *essence*,¹⁰⁹ nor even from its actual *being*¹¹⁰ (since this is not yet posited), but rather from its *nature*¹¹¹—absolutely and immediately from its inner necessity, that it is unconditioned but can only subsist under the form of the {equal} being¹¹² of both A and B.¹¹³ It is evident (from this *immediate* positing of the power of gravity through absolute identity) how impossible it is to hope to discover gravity as gravity or to exhibit it in actuality, since it must be conceived through the absolute identity which is the ground of its being, not through identity as itself subsisting, therefore, not as actual.¹¹⁴

Defnition. I also will call gravity constructive force and absolute identity insofar as it contains the ground of its being. The reason is to be found in the previous remark.

Cor. 1. From this it is evident that the power of gravity is indirectly the ground of *all* reality, not just of the being but also the duration of all things.

Cor. 2. What we call matter is not matter as such but absolute identity itself, insofar as it contains the ground of the first realization of A and B.

Cor. 3. All matter is primordially fluid—this follows from the proof of theorem 51.

§ 55. *The subjective*¹¹⁵ *cognizing principle is conjoined to matter itself, or is first realized within it.*

This follows from the whole preceding deduction.

Remark. This realization of the cognizing principle, however, leaves wholly undetermined the degree of its objectivity in relation to the totality, that is, the potency of $A = B$.

§ 56. *Within matter, A and B are established*¹¹⁶ *with predominate objectivity (in relation to the whole).*

Cor. 1. In relation to the whole, therefore, matter is $A = \overset{+}{B}$ (§ 46, Cor.).

Cor. 2. When A and B are established with objectivity predominating, the former is the attractive power, the latter the repulsive power.

Remark. It is clear enough from the whole of this deduction what in general follows from the inclusion of the cognizing principle as a real factor in

the construction of matter, and, in particular, what follows in relation to the sole conceivable idealism (which is at the same time full-blown realism). –At any rate, this objective ideality-reality of matter was previously explained in my *Ideas for a Ph.[ilosophy] o.[f] N.[ature]*, the fourth Chapter of the Second Book. On this particular topic, the reader is also advised to compare p. 190 ff. of the *Sys.[tem] o.[f] Tr.[anscendental] Ideal.[ism]*.

§ 57. *The quantitative positing of attractive power and repulsive power extends infinitely.*

Proof. This is the case because (a) A and B as such are posited quantitatively with respect to the whole, that is, with objectivity and subjectivity predominating in opposite directions. (b) But what holds for the whole also holds for the part, since absolute identity is posited infinitely in the same form (§ 39). Hence, inside the individual potency, A and B are quantitatively posited once again, in this case as the power of attraction and the power of repulsion, and indeed infinitely posited, since that potency is in itself or in relation to itself intrinsically infinite (§ 40). Therefore the quantitative positing of attractive force and repulsive force extends unto infinity.

Expl.[anation]. From the proof for § 51, it is evident that both forces as such can be posited only with quantitative difference. So in actuality, there can be no individual thing wherein the two are posited in perfect equilibrium, without the relative preponderance of one or the other. A perfect equilibrium can exist only *in the totality*, not in the individual, and this holds with respect to this [first] power. The material universe will be a perfect equilibrium of attractive and repulsive forces, with the same infinity expressed in this potency, where it expresses only one pole ($A = \overset{+}{B}$), as is portrayed in the totality as the absolute universe.

Remark. From this will be evident the error of those who take the material universe to be the infinite itself.

§ 58. *The ideal principle is, as ideal principle, incapable of limitation.* (This follows from § 20.)

Cor. 1. It is limited, therefore, only insofar as it is equal to the real principle, that is, insofar as it is itself real.

2. Accordingly, since (1) *as real*, it is limited, it cannot be limited as ideal.

3. In this way, since as real it is limited, as ideal it will be immediately posited as illimitable (2).

4. But it cannot be posited as illimitable except in a higher potency of subjectivity. *Proof.* This is so since it is limited in the lower potency (2, 3).

5. Immediately from the situation that $A = B$ subsists as relative totality, it is posited in this higher potency, for $A = B$ is the quantitative¹¹⁷ [delimited] establishment of A and B that extends unto infinity (§ 57).

6. The quantitative being-posited or delimitation of A in $A = B$ is specific gravity.¹¹⁸ This follows from § 56, Cor. 2.

Remark. The schema of this second potency is the same as that of the first (§ 50, Expl. 3). Hence,

- § 59. *All potencies are contained in matter as the prime existent,¹²³ if not in actuality, then at least in possibility.* – This is because matter is the first relative totality, or: Within matter is comprehended the ideal principle, which, as intrinsically illimitable (§ 58), contains the ground of all the potencies.

c. The theory of what we term “dynamic process” falls under the phase of relative opposition in this potency. Since this topic has been discussed often in other places, we take the liberty of asserting many theorems here without repeating their proofs, since it is more our purpose to provide a total concept of our system rather than to linger on specific items.

§ 60. *The immediate object of A^2 is the situation of the ideal principle being limited through the real.* — This is so since only through this limitation¹²⁴ does $A = B$ subsist (§ 57). $A = B$, however, is the immediate object of A^2 , as is self-evident.

Cor. Since A^2 is in conflict with the *being* of $A = B$ (§ 58, Expl. 1), so this conflict is a struggle against the limitation of the ideal principle by the real, thus against specific gravity (§ 58, Expl. 6), and since generally only specific gravity exists in act,¹²⁵ and because the quantitative position¹²⁶ of A and B proceeds to infinity, this is a struggle against gravity as such.

§ 61. *Definition.* By nature I provisionally¹²⁷ mean absolute identity as such insofar as it exists in act under the form of being of A and B . (The objective subject-object).

§ 62. A^2 is light.

Cor. Light is an internal intuiting of nature, gravity an external one. — This is because light has as its immediate object the inner principle of nature as limited in $A = B$.

Remark. Even if it can be objective for a still higher potency, A^2 in relation to nature itself is something *simply inner* and is not to be conceived as something external.

§ 63. *Gravity pertains solely to the **BEING** of the product that is signified by $A = B$.* This follows from § 54.

Cor. 1. Accordingly, this product endeavors to persist in its being. Only to the extent that this happens can it, together with light, produce relative totality (§ 58, Expl. 3).

Cor. 2. Since gravity is the constructing power (§ 54, Def.), it is determined by light to reconstruction,¹²⁸ while light itself is the factor that determines this reconstruction.

§ 64. *When $A = B$ is established as relative totality along with A^2 (§ 58, Cor. 5),¹²⁹ all ideal forms of being can be exhibited in $A = B$ as their substance: relative identity, relative duplicity, and relative totality.*

Proof. Neither relative identity nor duplicity can subsist in itself, but only through relative totality. (This follows from the proof for § 51). Now $A = B$ subsists as relative totality. Therefore, etc.

Cor. Relative i.[dentity] and relative d.[uplicity], therefore, are for the first time *real* in this [second] potency.

Definiton 1. That relative identity is established through totality means that A and B are both posited as powers of $A = B$ (which therefore remains in its identity) and as such are established in relative identity, *or*: the power of gravity, the identical $A = B$, which to this point has attained no actual or empirical being¹³⁰ (§ 54, Remark), is established as *subsistent* under the potencies of A and B , the latter conceived in relative identity. — The same holds for relative duplicity.

2. I designate the rel.[ative] identity, etc. posited through totality the relative identity, etc., *of the second potency*. –The relative identity and duplicity of the first potency, therefore, does not exist (Cor. [above]).

§ 65. *When A and B are posited in relative identity within the second potency,*¹³¹ *they are posited under the form of the line* (§ 46, Cor.). –Each is established as *subsistent* through relative totality (§ 64, Def. 1), therefore, etc. (see the proof for § 51).

§ 66. *Matter is posited as identity under the form of this line, not just in particular contexts, but also in the whole.* Since $A = A$ as such is posited only under the form of this line (§ 46), this line is the same in the particular and in the whole (§ 39). Therefore, etc.

Cor. So there is but one matter and every difference that can be posited within matter = one that is established in this line.

§ 67. *The form of this line is what provides the condition of cohesion.* –This is so because in every point of this line are A and B, attractive power and repulsive power, in relative identity. Accordingly, between every two points of this line there is a force which resists the distance between them, i.e., cohesion.¹³²

Corollary. The identical $A = B$ posited under the form of the relative identity of A and B (§ 64, Def. 1) is therefore the *power of cohesion*.

Definition. I call A the determining factor, B the determined factor of cohesion; the former is also its negative, the latter its positive factor.

§ 68. *The form of this line is that of magnetism.*

Cor. Cohesion actively conceived = magnetism. I have already provided proof of this theorem elsewhere. So in explaining the coincidence of magnetism with the line constructed in § 46 we make only the explicit comment that at the end-points of a magnet there is encountered neither a pure + nor a pure -, but both at once, with here a predominating + and there a predominating -. See Brugman's *über die magnetische Materie*, p. 92.¹³³

§ 69. *Matter as a whole is to be viewed as an infinite magnet.* –The infinite aspect follows from § 57, its magnetic character from § 66, Cor. and 67.

Cor. 1. *In every [instance of] matter is contained all others, if not actu,*¹³⁴ *then at least potentialiter.*¹³⁵ This follows from § 66, Cor.

2. In the material word, therefore, everything has been produced from one [source].

§ 70. *Matter cannot be established under the form of magnetism without being posited in reference to itself as totality.* –This follows from § 65 and 41, Cor.

Remark. This totality in connection to itself = substance and accident. –In the proposition $A = A$, identity itself is posited as *substance*, but A and A as mere accidents (or forms of the being) of this substance. Accordingly, substance is independent of accidents (§ 6). Substance within matter is = ($A = B$), the accidents are A and B conceived as potencies of this identical entity. $A = B$ is

therefore primordial and independent of A as well as B; the former is the prime existent, the latter are conceived as its potencies (§ 51, Cor.).

§ 71. *Magnetism is what conditions configuration.* – This follows from § 67, Cor.

Remark 1. The identity of matter is thus also an identity of shape or figure. This follows from § 65.

2. Just as magnetism is what conditions solidity (§ 67, Cor.), so in turn solidity is the condition for the appearance of magnetism.

§ 72. *Increase and decrease in cohesion stand in a determinate inverse relation to increase and decrease in specific gravity.*¹³⁶ This follows from [§] 58, Corollary 6.

Remark 1. A more detailed exploration and exposition of these laws first discovered by him is expected in Herr Steffens' *Beiträge zur inneren Naturgeschichte der Erde*.¹³⁷ In advance of that we remark only the following. — The ideal principle remains in conflict with gravity, and since the latter has the greatest preponderance in the mid-point, so that which is near to it first achieves the unity of a measureable specific gravity with solidity, so that A and B can be brought back under its dominion with a lesser degree of difference. The greater this degree of difference becomes, the more is specific gravity overcome; in even higher grades of difference, however, cohesion is reduced to the point where greater specific gravity coincides with decreasing cohesion and finally both together simultaneously decline. So, according to Steffens, in the series of metals we see the specific gravity of platinum, gold, etc. decline to that of iron, while in the last mentioned (active) cohesion increases and achieves its maximum, then yields a measureable specific gravity (e.g., in lead), until in still deeper lying metals both cohesion and specific weight decline. — Herr Steffens has very nicely shown how this mode of nature, since it steadily diminishes specific gravity, is compelled to progress through maximum cohesion, and thus facilitates the production of magnetism, and further how, just as bodies greatest in specific gravity lie beneath the equator and nearby areas, less dense¹³⁸ and more coherent ones (iron, in particular) are accumulated around the poles (especially around the north pole). A complete construction of the series of cohesion, however, will first be made possible through the following laws.

2. I believe I can show (even if at first glance it might not appear so) that the inclination of the magnetic needle has its ground in this [§ 72] law.¹³⁹

§ 73. *In a magnet, taken as a whole, what has relatively greater cohesion pertains to the negative side, and what has relatively lesser cohesion pertains to the positive.*

Def. Where the negative factor is predominant,¹⁴⁰ I term that the negative side, and vice versa. The proof follows from § 67, Def. (see volume 1, issue 2, p. 74 of this journal).

Cor. 1. Since the whole of the magnet is again present at any given point of it, that same [division of negative and positive factors] pertains to every part of the magnet.

Cor. 2. No body can become a magnet without its cohesion being simultaneously relatively enhanced and diminished.

§ 74. *All difference among bodies comes about only through the positions they occupy within the total-magnet (§ 66).* —This follows from § 66, Corollary.

§ 75. *Any two bodies that are different from each other can be regarded as the two opposite sides of a magnet, and the more their relative difference, the more this is true.* —This directly follows from § 74 and 73.

§ 76. *The empirical magnet must be regarded as the indifference-point of the universal magnet* (for the same reasons that support § 74).

Remark. For what is understood by the “indifference-point” of the magnet, see this journal, volume 1, issue 1, p. 111. —*Def.* Iron is the empirical magnet.

§ 77. *All bodies are potentially contained in iron.* —This is so because the indifference-point, hence (§ 46, Cor.) the identity (the $A = A$) of all matters, that whereby they are matter, falls within iron.

§ 78. *Definition.* I term the alteration which one and the same substance ($A = B$) undergoes¹⁴¹ whereby it is established with a relative preponderance of A ¹⁴² in one direction and with a relative preponderance of B in the opposite direction,¹⁴³ the *metamorphosis* of this substance.

*Cor. All bodies are merely metamorphoses of iron.*¹⁴⁴ —This follows from the above definition in conjunction with § 73 and 74.

§ 79. *Intrinsically, there are no individual bodies.* —§ 66, Cor.¹⁴⁵

§ 80. *Every body that is conceived to be individual must be conceived as tending towards totality.*¹⁴⁶ —Since it is not in itself, thanks to the power of gravity (according to § 63, Cor.) each body strives to preserve its being. Therefore, etc.

Cor. 1. Each individual body accordingly tends to be a totality itself, that is, (§ 70) a complete magnet.

Cor. 2. The further a body is from the indifference[-point], the greater this endeavor [to itself be the totality].

Cor. 3. Every two distinct bodies tend to cohere, this follows from Cor. 1 [above], in conjunction with § 75.

§ 81. *In general, every body has an endeavor to extend its cohesion to the whole.* —This is so because each has the endeavor to persist in its identity (§ 80, Cor. 1). But a body is an identity only through cohesion¹⁴⁷ (§ 70). Therefore, etc.

Cor. But no body can relatively enhance its cohesion except at the expense of another.¹⁴⁸ — This follows from § 80, Corollary 1, in conjunction § 75.

§ 82. *Definition.* Contact between two bodies is production of contiguity.

§ 83. *Two distinct bodies that touch one another produce in each other a reciprocal increase and decrease in cohesion.* —This follows from § 73, in conjunction with § 75 and 80, Corollary 1.

Cor. 1. This reciprocal alteration in cohesion through the contact of two distinct bodies is the sole ground of all *electricity*.

Cor. 2. Electricity falls under the schema of relative duplicity, which is expressed $\begin{array}{c} A \\ \perp \\ C \end{array}$ B through the angle.

Cor. 3. Since AC and CB are intrinsically the same, like the two sides of a magnet where each side is itself a magnet, electricity too falls under the schema of magnetism, or the angle ACB is reducible to the straight line ACB (§ 51). – For electricity, therefore, contact between two bodies is necessary to furnish the point C of this line, whereby it might be evident that within this potency as a whole is recapitulated under the schema of magnetism everything that pertains to magnetism, electricity, etc.¹⁴⁹

Cor. 4. The relation of relative identity = that of *cause* and *effect*.¹⁵⁰

Cor. 5. From the deduction itself, the reason is evident why the appearances of electricity manifest only through contact or separation between two bodies.¹⁵¹

§ 84. *Indifferent bodies that touch one another tend to establish in themselves a mutual reduction of cohesion*, since in general each body has the endeavor to increase its cohesion (§ 81), while this is possible only under the condition of a reduction of cohesion in another body (same [§] Cor.), each of two indifferently related bodies which touch one another establishes the other in the latter state [i.e., a reduction of cohesion].

Cor. Reduction of cohesion, simply considered, = heat, while, relatively considered, or in connection to proportional increase in cohesion, it is = electricity (§ 83, Cor. 1).

§ 85. *Of two different bodies that are in contact, the one which undergoes a relative increase in cohesion becomes negative-electrical, while that which undergoes an identical reduction in cohesion becomes positive*.¹⁵² – This follows from § 73, 75.

Cor. 1. The pole of the magnet (e.g., the earth) that is relatively diminished in cohesion is the south-pole, that which is increased, the north-pole; hence the former = +M, the latter = –M.

Cor. 2. +E = +M, –E = –M.¹⁵³

§ 86. *Electricity is communicated and conduced through the same mechanism whereby it is excited*.

Explanation. If there is a body A B D C $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline & & \\ \hline \end{array}$ which suffers a

relative reduction of cohesion in C through D through contact with another body, then CD will stand related to DB the way two bodies of different cohesion stand in relation to one another. That is, the [sufficient] condition of electricity is realized, and since CD has a necessary endeavor to sustain its state (§ 63, Cor. 1), it will increase its cohesion at the expense of DB; in the same way, the latter will be reduced in its cohesion (§ 81, Cor.) and so establish a +electrical [charge] (§ 85). The same relation holds between DB and BA. In this way the +E established at C spreads over the whole body from C toward A, and is reproduced from A toward C until the reduction in cohesion is uniform across the entire surface.

Cor. Hence electricity is always merely excited and is fundamentally not communicated.

§ 87. *Heat and the excitation of electricity stand in an inverse relation.*¹⁵⁴

This is evident from § 84, in conjunction with 85.

Remark. Thereby the cause can be stated for the precise correlation between the excitation of electricity and the simultaneous increase and decrease of cohesion (§ 83). Hence as much as heat¹⁵⁵ as there is in B, so much positive non-heat¹⁵⁶ there is in A, and thereby *zero heat*.

§ 88. *Heat is conducted and communicated in the same way as electricity is*, that is, it is simply not communicated in the ordinary sense of the word (§ 86, *Cor.*)

Expl. If the body ABDC (as in § 86) becomes warm in DC, that is, is diminished in its cohesion, then its cohesion is increased at the expense of DB, and so forth, and this diminution of cohesion, i.e., heat, again appears to be propagated from CD toward DB.

Cor. 1. A body is heated only insofar as it conducts, and conversely, it conducts only insofar as it is heated.

2. For a body that is conductive, every process of conducting heat is a process of withdrawing heat,¹⁵⁷ and the conductive power is thereby to be estimated according to the energy whereby a body cools itself (not the energy whereby it diminishes heat in another body by reducing its own cohesion).

§ 89. *The process of conducting electricity takes place under the form of magnetism*, and is an active process of cohesion, because it does not occur with a simultaneous increase and reduction of cohesion between two different bodies, or between two points of the same body (§ 86), therefore under the form of magnetism (§ 73, *Cor. 2*) and thereby also as an active process of cohesion (§ 68, *Cor.*).

Remark. The conductive process actually manifests as cohesion, e.g., in the attachment of opposite electrical bodies to one another, and this coherence is in turn the proof that cohesion in general is possible only under the condition of + and – [subsisting together].

§ 90. *The process of conducting heat (the cooling process) is an electrical process.* —This follows from¹⁵⁸ § 87 (and, since the production of heat and the production of electricity stand in an inverse relation, the destruction of heat is possible only by means of an electrical process¹⁵⁹), and still more precisely from § 86.

Examples. The cooling process of tourmaline with a reversal of the polarity which (through a specific relation that will be explained later) was posited through heating. –The cooling process of molten sulfur (for which of course friction, that is, contact at multiple points, is required). –Cooling through moistening, etc. –A heated body, considered in complete isolation, is certainly not electrical, for electricity subsists only in the alterations of relative cohesion. But if a second body (e.g., a thermometer) is introduced, the [sufficient] condition of the electrical process is given and the process is actually established.

§ 91. *Just as cohesion is a function of length, in every case conductive power is a function of cohesion.* –The immediately preceding theorems are the proof.

Cor. 1. Just as electrical phenomena [occur] under the form of magnetism, in the same way the transfer of heat occurs under the form of electrical conduction; every conductive power, therefore, directly or indirectly reduces to magnetic force.¹⁶⁰

Cor. 2. All conduction is a body's striving toward identity. It is not the body in itself that serves as a conductor, but the power of gravity (§ 63) insofar as it is constrained to act under the form of cohesion.

§ 92. *Gravity is established as subsisting through cohesion.* –*Proof.* For the power of gravity in itself, as the¹⁶¹ ground of the real being of A and B, is for that very reason not *actual* (§ 54, Remark). But it is established as *actual*¹⁶² through being posited as the identical $A = B$ under the potencies of A and B, conceived in relative identity¹⁶³ (§ 64, Explanation); now cohesion is established through the relative identity of A and B (§ 65, 66). Therefore, etc.

§ 93. *In light subsists absolute identity itself.* –For absolute identity generally *is* or exists immediately though A and B being established as subsisting (§ 50). But both of these as such subsist, i.e., are posited with quantitative difference, (§ 24) directly through cohesion, but so too directly does A^2 (§ 58, Corollary 7) [or] light (§ 62). Therefore absolute identity itself subsists in light.¹⁶⁴

Remark 1. While we have had to discern in gravity an essential aspect of absolute identity (§ 54, Remark), it is not present as *subsisting*, since it is (itself) rather the ground of gravity's subsistence.¹⁶⁵ Absolute identity does not subsist in the power of cohesion, but in gravity, which in itself does not subsist (*ibid.*). In light arises absolute identity itself, in actuality. [When light appears] gravity flees into the eternal night, and absolute identity itself does not fully dissolve the seal under which it lies concealed, even if it is constrained to produce it as the one identical factor under the potency of A and B, and bring it to light, as it were.¹⁶⁶

Remark 2. Without being aware of it, all physicists ascribe to gravity as such a mere abstract being, while, by contrast, they regard the power of cohesion as already something empirical, i.e., comprising something in the sphere of actual existence. But in fact within cohesion, gravity subsists only as the ground of reality, not as reality itself. Within light, on the other hand, absolute identity is itself the real factor, and not the mere ground of reality.

Cor. Since light is absolute identity itself, it too is necessarily identical in its essence. —This follows immediately [from the above §].

Remark 3. We should thank the gods that we have been freed from the Newtonian *spectrum* of composite light (indeed a specter!) by that same genius to whom we owe so much else.¹⁶⁷ – In fact it is only on the basis of such a view which maintains the absolute identity of light and thereby refutes the

so-called empirical proofs of this nihilistic hypothesis, and which posits the purest and simplest claims of nature itself in place of the artificial and deformed “experiments” of the Newtonian school, that this whole system of identity advances itself. For this reason it is not remarkable, but completely natural and quite comprehensible, that physicists who have sworn feudal allegiance to the Newtonian theories oppose investigations which prove quite undeniably that even in the part of physics where previously they were accustomed to possess the most extensive, indeed almost geometrical, evidence [viz., optics], they have found themselves in the most baseless errors with respect to essential points. Such experiences, in the long or short run, could undermine the faith among the people in these blind priests of the veiled goddess and give rise to a general surmise that things stand no better in all the other parts of authentic physics (namely, the dynamic disciplines), and that the true physics must first now *begin* to develop and extricate itself from error and darkness. A future history of physics will not fail to remark what a retarding influence the Newtonian view of light exercised upon the whole science and how, on the other hand, the opposite view, once adopted and made basic, opens nature up, as it were, and makes room for *ideas* which up to that point were virtually banned.

Explanation [1]. In view of everything above, one will be able to formulate the relation of gravity to the power of cohesion and of the latter to light. Gravity is absolute identity insofar as it produces its form of being¹⁶⁸; the power of cohesion is gravity which exists in the general form of being (A and B)¹⁶⁹; light is absolute identity itself insofar as it *is*. In gravity, absolute identity subsists merely in essence,¹⁷⁰ i.e., (§ 15, Cor.) abstracted from the form of its being (which is initially produced), light is the existence of absolute identity itself, and this is the reason for the different [modes of] being of gravity and of light.

2. To a great extent, most people think that what is ideal exists or subsists less than what is real, and so they value the former less than the latter. Others do the reverse, and despise the real as if it were not equal to the purity of the ideal. This may especially be noted in the way the latter see in light a *purely ideal, actually existent principle*.¹⁷¹

§ 94. *Absolute identity is established as light only insofar as A and B are factors of cohesion, and conversely, A and B are established as factors of cohesion only through light. –Proof.* For, directly from the positing of $A = B$, A^2 is also established (§ 58, Cor. 7). But $A = B$ is directly posited as the substrate of relative identity through A^2 (the higher potency) being posited (§ 64); it is established only as relative identity, since relative duplicity also reduces to relative identity (§ 83, Cor. 3), and relative identity is the form of cohesion (§ 65, compare with 67). Therefore, 1) A and B themselves are directly established as factors of cohesion through absolute identity as A^2 being posited as light, 2) Absolute identity itself subsists as A^2 only insofar as A and B are factors of cohesion.

Explanation. It might seem to many that the preceding theorem and its proof went in a circle, [but] this [misimpression] will be cleared up if we more carefully spell out the relation between light and gravity.

$A = B$ is relative totality, but only in reference to a higher potency, for in reference to itself it is absolute [totality] (§ 42, Def. 2). Now complete indifference is posited in the absolute totality. Gravity as absolute totality would, therefore, posit the complete indifference of the attractive and repulsive force. However, with regard to the particular, it quantitatively posits both A and B indefinitely (§ 57) and only with regard to the *whole* does it posit them in perfect equilibrium (*ibid*, Expl.); it is determined to the former [quantitative positing] through the higher potency [viz., A^2], and for that reason, it is only *relative* totality. With this establishment of attractive and repulsive forces in quantitative difference, the degree of cohesion is also posited (§ 72); hence gravity is determined to posit *cohesion* only through the *higher* potency. Cohesion is established, therefore, in just the way that $A = B$ is generally posited as relative totality, that is, just as primordially as $A = B$ itself is posited; conversely, the higher potency (hence absolute identity as A^2) is established in that $A = B$ can be posited only as relative totality under the form of quantitative difference (cohesion). *In this situation, therefore*, [where gravity and light mutually posit one another] *there is no before and no after, but absolute simultaneity of the [two] powers as such* (§ 44). I say “as such,” for although simply considered $A = B$ precedes A^2 (it is the first ground of all reality, § 54, Cor. 1), as a potency it does not, for all the powers mutually presuppose one another, as can easily be seen from § 43.

Cor. Since absolute identity is light (A^2) only insofar as A and B are factors of cohesion (§ above), cohesion is necessarily also the limit of *light itself*, and the whole dominion of light (and thereby also of the dynamic process¹⁷²) is confined to the territory of cohesion, a theorem which will shortly prove to be important.

§ 95. *The material universe is formed through a primordial process of cohesion.*
–Proof. This is so because gravity is the ground of things only according to substance (§ 70, Remark) not according to form (accidental aspect). But gravity itself is *active*¹⁷³ only under the form of cohesion (§ 92), for through cohesion it is established under the general form (accidental aspect) of being, as A and B (§ 70, Remark); but the actual being of gravity is the material universe (§ 57): therefore, the material universe is formed through a primordial process of cohesion.¹⁷⁴

Remark. The proof also immediately follows from the fact that matter is to be viewed, within the totality just as in individual instances, as a magnet (§ 69).

Cor. 1. Our planetary system in particular is formed through a process of cohesion, and in it as a whole is a magnet, in the same way that the earth is one on an individual scale.

Remark. This theorem is a direct consequence of § 95, compare with § 39. I place it here in particular, since on its basis a generic proof is possible, as I shall shortly show in greater detail. —In the same way as the earth shows a relative diminution on one side (the south-pole) and on the opposite side (the north) a relative increase in cohesion, so too does the planetary system. The whole of physical astronomy proceeds from the basic principle advanced [in the above corollary]. The cause of the eccentricity of orbits, the relationship of density to mass and orbital eccentricities, the cause and the law of the inclination of planetary bodies, the axis of {their} rotation, e.g., the deviation of the magnetic needle, the laws whereby moons are formed and attached to the major planets, etc., all these subjects find their common explanation in the line of thought that presents the formation of the planetary system as a universal process of cohesion. —The law set forth in § 72 and first communicated to me by Herr Steffens has served more than I might have hoped to finally bring to completion this long cultivated and publicly communicated line of thought. Its chief principle, however, is the different degree of *coherence* [that obtains] *in different points of the magnet itself* according to the law expounded in § 73.

Cor. 2. The planetary system has developed through metamorphosis. —This follows from Corollary 1 above; compare with § 73, Def.

Cor. 3. The series of bodies that form the planetary system can differ in no other way than according to the law which was set out in § 74. There is, therefore, in the whole [universe] or considered in itself, *one mass*.

Cor. 4. The series of terrestrial bodies¹⁷⁵ is similar to the series of the heavenly bodies. This follows from Corollary 3 [above], compare with the general law that in the individual is everything that subsists in the whole.

Remark. This theorem permits of quite distinct employment, e.g., to comprehend many phenomena in the series of metals wherein, apparently, several relate to certain others as moons relate to major planets.

Explanations. It is necessary that I say something here of the way that, following the paradigm of my thoughts about cohesion and light—particularly the way we were put in position, thanks to the auspicious ideas of Herr Steffens, to explore the two poles of the magnetic line all the way to their separate expression in carbon and nitrogen (which view has since been put to experiment in the voltaic battery) [and thereby] achieve a complete proof of my ideas on the essence of water—I have been compelled to conceive the metamorphosis of earthly elements according to these assumptions. The nature of this exposition and its entire method of investigation permits only the statement of the most general features; a complete and detailed account is to be sought on the path of [experiment and] induction and is certainly to be expected of *Steffens* (in his *Beiträge*, etc.). —In advance of this, we set out some general propositions. One might introduce the whole process of metamorphosis¹⁷⁶ in the following way:

Absolute identity is not intrinsically light, but only insofar as the identical $A = B$ is posited under the form of the subsistence of A and B, these conceived as factors in cohesion (evident from § 94).

Insofar as it is light, absolute identity cannot overstep the limits of cohesion, since it *is* only under the condition of the latter.

Absolute identity, however, endeavors not to subsist under this or that form ($A = B$), but simply under the form ($A = A$).

Cohesion is therefore an actual boundary of light insofar as light is absolute identity.

So once this limit is established, i.e., once absolute identity is simply light, it necessarily tends again *to annul cohesion* in this sphere where it is light. –The chief problem of cohesion's deconstruction is thus iron and this will be resolved into opposite directions.

Viewed from the speculative standpoint, though, matter as a whole and in particular is primordially posited under the form of quantitative difference with respect to the individual and indifference with respect to the whole. –Hence we view metamorphosis as something primordial and posited along with the total-magnet of terrestrial matter in its complete totality. This much [may suffice] for a preliminary explanation.

1) The location of cohesion insofar as it is active lies in the indifference-point itself, hence in the perspective of the whole series [of chemical elements] in iron. Accordingly, active cohesion is present in iron.

2) Quantitative difference is established in two opposite directions [of the series of chemical elements], in one direction with a predominant positive factor, in the other with a predominant negative one.

3) Outside the indifference-point, I term cohesion a passive [force] and it is understood to increase in the negative direction, while in the positive direction it gradually approaches total dissolution.

4) Along the negative side fall those elements closest to iron in coherence, the so-called noble metals, until the series resolves into bodies of the greatest passive coherence (e.g., diamonds) and manifests as pure carbon.

5) Along the positive side fall certain metals in which the cohesion of iron gradually loses itself and on this side finally disappears in bodies of the least coherence,¹⁷⁷ and finally in pure nitrogen.

6) From (3) it is evident why carbon generally appears in concrescence with earth elements (even in plants), while nitrogen does so apart from cohesion with them (even in animals).

7) As long as the potencies of difference (A and B) are fully separated in opposed directions, matter falls in the absolute indifference-point. This is signified through water (the primordial fluid element, wherein the pure third dimension is produced, § 51, c).

8) In this whole process of metamorphosis, the substance remains the same (§ 78, Def.), and only the accidental feature or cohesion is altered.

9) As completely undifferentiated substance, water can be potentiated in opposite directions, so that in one pole it can attach to the positive, in the other to the negative side of the¹⁷⁸ series.¹⁷⁹ In the latter case it is called oxygen, in the former hydrogen (the substance with the least cohesion).

10) Just as nitrogen and carbon are the factors of active cohesion, oxygen and hydrogen are the factors of passive cohesion, or just as the former are the chemical representation of the two forms of magnetism, so the latter is the chemical representation of the two kinds of electricity (in this particular matter, one may compare vol. 1 of this journal, 2nd issue, p. 68ff.). The former tend to increase cohesion, the latter to decrease it.¹⁸⁰

11) Water cannot be substantially altered in oxygen and hydrogen. –For no matter can undergo such an alteration in the dynamic process (§ 94, Cor.). Modern researches into the transformation of water teach nothing in this respect that pertains exclusively to water, but only confirm the universal theorem proved in the philosophy of nature, that all qualities are only potencies or powers of the one, identical and indifferent $A = B$. (One can consult the *Abh.[andlung] von Dyn.[amischen] Proz[esses]*, vol. 1, issues 1 & 2 of this journal, p. 47 ff.) In the sense in which water is indivisible, it is all matter.¹⁸³ – The only thing that is the exclusive property of water is expressed in the following proposition.

12) Water is incapable of any enduring polarity. This is because polarity subsists only under the form of solidity and of magnetism (§ 68). The transformations of water point toward a higher relationship, that of the entire earth to the sun.¹⁸² For if the sun managed to annex the earth to itself in the same way that the earth annexes the moon, or produces an enduring east and west polarity, water would disappear from the earth, just as the way, by all appearances, it has disappeared from the moon.

13) Just as iron contains carbon and nitrogen in relative indifference, water contains the two in absolute indifference, and so all true polarity of the earth reduces to an original one, that of south and north, which is fixed in the magnet.

In this series [of transformations or metamorphosis] is contained all the original matter of the earth, just as in these few theorems is contained the theory of the entire dynamic process.¹⁸³

Cor. 5. This theory of metamorphosis, of which we can admittedly furnish only the high points, leaves one question unanswered, namely, it fixes only the place that each matter occupies in the original series,¹⁸⁴ but not the quantity of this matter. Perhaps the remark must be repeated here (vol. I, issue 2, p. 56 of this journal) that the formula $A : R$ can designate only the relative quantity of forces, never the absolute magnitude. The formula $2A : 2R$, for example, does not say that twice the quantity of the forces was expended, but that the ratio of the forces is entirely the same. Now, with respect to every determinate matter, each magnitude varies indefinitely, while the ratio remains the same in smallest part as in the largest. Individually considered or in and

for themselves, the forces simply have no quantity, since as the form of the subsistence of absolute identity, both are infinite; quantity is attained only in and through this ratio. Accordingly, the extensive magnitude of a body can be expressed through nothing other than the addition of this ratio to itself, and this addition is established through *cohesion*. Of itself, there is no addition; $A = B$ is simply one, absolute constancy. With the transition from this¹⁸⁵ to a relative one, a part (discrete magnitude) and the addition of one part to another first becomes possible. The formula $A : R$ signifies a mere 1; the schema of cohesion is the series $1 + 1 + 1 \dots$ without end. A 2 is first posited through relative duplicity, hence electricity (§ 89, Cor.). In primordial production there is not addition, but pervasion, utterly no part, but absolute unity.¹⁸⁶ But it is another question how the magnitude of this addition is itself determined; on this topic, the following is offered. Since passive cohesion increases along the negative side [of the series], the metamorphosis necessarily passes through the maximum of specific gravity. But the cohesion process of heavier bodies¹⁸⁷ cannot be continued for long at such a marked degree, since the original proportion does not allow this reduction of attractive force for long; in the opposite direction, however, it displays the positive factor more extravagantly, until it finally produces the greatest magnitude at the indifference-point, which may be demonstrated most clearly through investigations of the planetary system and the amount of iron in the earth. Hence there subsist in the [universe as a] whole one attractive force and one repulsive force which is aggregated more or less only in opposite directions. –The physicist might be at liberty to explain the distribution of forces through an endless process of diminution (of the [forces] of individual bodies to the earth, and of the earth to the planetary system as a whole) etc. [Philosophical] speculation, which does not sanction such a regress, annihilates it through totality and absolute identity, which comprehends everything.

§ 96. *Absolute identity, insofar as it subsists as light, is not power but activity.* –For as light it is not the ground of reality, but is *itself* reality (§ 93). But it is not a particular being, for it is being *itself* (§ 8), also not limited, i.e., passive, and so pure activity (§ 36).

§ 97. *Absolute identity is directly posited through the force of gravity being established as subsistent.* For thereby all the conditions of its subsistence are established, as is evident from a comparison of what was just said with § 45, 46.

§ 98. *Absolute identity is not in itself light, but is such only insofar as it is the absolute identity of this potency.* For it subsists only as $A^2 = \text{light}$ (§ 62). This follows still more directly from § 94.

Cor. 1. Conversely, if light is considered in itself (abstracted from the potency [it occupies]), it is absolute identity itself.

Cor. 2. As the absolute identity of this potency, light is posited only through the limit of this potency, hence, through *cohesion* (§ 94, Corollary).

§ 99. *Definition.* In light, identity is transparency.

Cor. The power of gravity¹⁸⁸ flees from light since it emerges from it as the immediate ground of its existence. But gravity is transparent for absolute identity, since for it everything is identical. However it is not transparent for absolute identity insofar as it is light, since identity is = light only insofar as the power of gravity¹⁸⁹ is itself posited under the form of quantitative difference (§ 94) – hence not as pure identity itself. Hence opacity is primordially only relative, and is established neither with respect to the force of gravity nor with respect to light, each considered absolutely.

Explanation. Not only is each of the individual factors within light, A and B, the same in essence (since each of them is the same absolute identity, § 22), but light is also the absolute indifference of the two. Opacity arises only through the two factors being posited in *relative* indifference, or quantitative difference, since in this relation the two mutually *darken* one another. Accordingly, in the cohesion series constructed above, transparency for light is precipitated only at the absolute indifference-point (§ 95, Cor. 4, Expl. 7) and at the two extremes of the gradations of cohesion, where against the predominance of one factor, the other nearly disappears, and so again brings forth undistorted identity. The greatest opacity necessarily falls in the point of the greatest weight posited under the form of cohesion. (Platinum and the rest of the metals).

§ 100. *Directly through absolute identity being established in opposition to the power of gravity, it is posited as mere light, i.e., as the absolute identity of this potency.*

Explanation. We do not doubt that it will seem contradictory to most people when we speak of an absolute identity *of this* potency, i.e., of an absolute identity that nonetheless is not absolute; this contradiction disappears, however, when the following is taken into consideration.

Considered in its essence, light is absolute identity itself; considered in its existence, it is the absolute identity of this potency. If one subtracts the potency, i.e., the mode of existence, light is simply absolute identity; if one adds this mode in thought, it cannot be annulled as absolute identity (§ 11); it is therefore in essence absolute identity in this potency just as it is also absolute identity according to its being with respect to all potencies. –The reader will steadily keep in mind that all opposites that may have been produced completely disappear from the standpoint of absolute indifference and are in themselves utterly nothing. So it is easy to see, e.g., that the existence of light only signifies the point of the whole [universe] where the preponderance falls wholly on the real side, so that gravity and light with respect to the whole form just one real entity, and so in no way stand in opposition.

§ 101. *Light cannot be posited as light without being posited under the universal form of being (A and B).*

Proof. This is because according to its essence (§ 98) it is not light, but absolute identity itself. That whereby it is light, therefore, does not belong to its

essence, and so also not to the essence of absolute identity; hence it is merely a form or mode of its existence¹⁹⁰ (§ 15, Cor. 1). Light *as* light is itself only a¹⁹¹ form of the subsistence of absolute identity. Now since the universal form of the subsistence of absolute identity is A and B, necessarily light is posited as light under the form of A and B.¹⁹²

§ 102. *Light is not posited in its essence under the form of A and B.* —This is so since it is not light according to its *essence* (§ 98) but is [posited] *as* light, etc. (§ 101). Therefore it is also not [posited] in its essence etc.

§ 103. *Light according to its essence is posited independently from A as well as B, which are both mere forms of its existence.* This follows with the same evidence as § 6.

Cor. Since neither A nor B is in itself light, but only absolute identity insofar as it is posited under the form of both, so it will be posited as light only in their relative indifference.

Remark. With respect to light, A and B are factors of cohesion (this is evident from § 94), B the expansive cohesion-reducing and +E [factor] (potentiating hydrogen), and so A the opposed [factor] (potentiating oxygen). With this, we return to a proposition put forth earlier (*von der Weltseele*,¹⁹³ p. 27); though it was left undeveloped then, it here for the first time receives both its confirmation and justification. In precisely this quantitative indifference of +[E] and –E is posited under completely opposite *modes of existence* one and the same identical entity (light).

We expressly make this remark so that one does not view our proposition as a confirmation of the supposition of some physicists that light is composed from some heat-substance and some other [physical] principle, light-substance. —Concerning the composition of light, see § 102. According to our deduction, A and B pertain not to the essence of light, which is absolute identity itself, but to the mere form of its existence as light. It is itself able to exist *as* light only in the indifference of A and B. Therefore even if our B is the heating principle, yet that which we signify by A is not considered the illuminating principle in light. The reason is that light and illumination as well immediately exist at the point where there is the complete indifference of both [factors], and which therefore is neither the one nor the other.

Definition. I call *distorted* or *beclouded*¹⁹⁴ *light* the light that is posited under the form of A and B *with quantitative difference*.

§ 105. *For light, all transparency is a merely relative one.* —This is evident from § 99, cp., its Expl.

Lemma 1. The effect of a relatively transparent body upon light is *refraction*. The inner efficacy of refraction is to distort light, i.e., [§ 103 Def.] to posit it under the form of A and B with quantitative difference. Its outer effect is the shifting or displacement of a luminous object.

2. The effect of an opaque body upon light is *reflection*. This too is a distortion of light.¹⁹⁵

Remark 1. Reflection and refraction have one and the same ground in nature.

2. That light is posited under the form of B through the effect of refraction as well as through reflection could yield some facts, e.g., that low air temperatures occur in the highest regions of the atmosphere while by and large higher ones occur in lower regions where light has passed through repeated refraction, and other similar cases.

Cor. Heat does not belong to the essence, but is a mere mode of existence of light.

§ 106. *Lemma.* Color is something purely accidental in reference to light. The inner efficacy of refraction is the distortion or beclouding of light,¹⁹⁶ the outer a shift of an image; but for this shift to produce colors requires in addition the random mutual conditioning of contiguous lighter and darker edges—see Goethe's *Beiträge zur Optik*, the first and second numbers.¹⁹⁷

Remark. From this lemma and § 105, *Cor.* it might incidentally be clear what is to be expected from *Herschel's*¹⁹⁸ new studies about the warming power of sunbeams and from the so-called heat-spectrum (similar to the Newtonian color-specter¹⁹⁹). But we do not want to encroach upon the German physicists who doubtless will find *Herschel's* conclusions highly convincing and who will view these remarkable studies as a new and almost incontrovertible proof of the Newtonian theory, or at least of a composition or polarity in light (as they understand it). Nonetheless, we would like to request of those who rehearse these views some clarifications that we seek in vain in *Herschel*, e.g., how the warming power relates to blue in particular (or also to yellow), about which Herr *Herschel* is completely silent (at least in the abstract we have before us, perhaps through the lack of a fluent and precise editor). One might almost imagine, lacking any further reason, that blue did not wish to fit itself into the Newtonian series of [lights] capable of being refracted²⁰⁰; with respect to warming just as much as to illumination, it is positioned as close to, e.g., red—*Annalen der Physik*, vol. VII, p. 142—with only so much difference as must result through, in the first case, the dark edge overlapping the bright, and in the second, the reverse, with the dark ground causing the overlap. As for *Herschel's* experiments with the different intensities of illumination produced by different colors of light, their result is just what one could have assumed beforehand, without any experiment. —To comment on this a bit more, it is striking that the space beyond the violet was investigated only with a thermometer and no other instruments.²⁰¹ —In the meantime, it is sufficient for the purpose of the present exposition to assert *that the postulate of the unity of light is in no way endangered by Herschel's recent researches and it can be proven more readily than*

the compositeness of light. A special essay in the following issue [of this journal] will provide a detailed proof of this assertion.

Corollary. According to its essence, light is colorless, or light is in its essence not determined through color. This is so, since light is only distorted, but never colored; what is colored is only the image or object. Accordingly, color is not something that can ever pertain to the essence of light.

Remark. From this it is apparent that even if an actual difference could be detected inside the prismatic image, yet this would in no way have anything to do with color, but would be wholly independent of it.

§ 107. *The warmth- and electrical conductive-power of a body is determined by its place in the cohesion-series.* —Because this is one function of cohesion (§ 91).

Cor. 1. All conductivity is merely the endeavor to produce active cohesion. —Now if one posits (1) a body wherein one factor in cohesion is predominant, e.g., the negative side, it will not in itself be able to produce active cohesion, but only through the help of a second item which introduces the other factor in cohesion, and so conductivity too. One may term such a body an insulator, since it only conducts at the point at which it is touched. If one posits (2) a body which approximates the equilibrium of active cohesion (e.g., all metals), it will be an excellent conductor of heat and electricity, both in itself and in contrast to another, though the power of greatest conductivity will not coincide with the point of greatest active cohesion (because this point can be established to a lesser degree outside the equilibrium, so too it will be determined to conduction to a lesser degree); the point of maximum active cohesion will fall in the product of the element closest to it in cohesion (e.g., silver, copper). (3) In the case of bodies where the positive factor of cohesion predominates, the first case will occur [again] and insulators be precipitated anew (e.g., sulfur, etc.). (4) Only one body falls in the absolute indifference-point, water; this element and the ones residing closest to it are in themselves simply not conductors, since in them all active cohesion is annulled; they are themselves capable of no $1 + 1 + 1 . . .$, but are an absolute unity with respect to the conduction-process. But since, to take an example, water is outwardly completely indifferent, it can be introduced into every conductive process as this *unity*²⁰²; therefore it can relatively, but not in itself or absolutely, be a conductor. —(Here lies the justification of modern ideas about the nonconductive property of liquids). Finally (5), where the series terminates in its poles so that the matter represents only one or the other factor (nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen), there necessarily recurs the power of nonconductivity.

Cor. 2. From what was just said, one can also understand the different ways that magnetism and electricity propagate themselves. Since the magnet is a perfect totality with respect to itself (§ 70) and is in itself active cohesion, neither of its poles can be altered from without (though it may happen through a stronger [magnet]); rather just the opposite occurs, and each will posit its opposite (with which it coheres) outside itself.

§ 108. *Def.* The sphere described up to this point, whose boundaries are formed through the antithesis of cohesion and light, we term the *dynamic sphere*; the activity inside of it, *dynamic activity*; insofar as the activity occurs under a specific form, *dynamic process*.

§ 109. *In the dynamic sphere,*²⁰³ *nature necessarily tends towards absolute indifference.* –*Proof.* This is so because with every single body, nature tends toward totality (§ 80). But this totality resides in the absolute whole, just as also in the particular potency (§ 39), only in absolute indifference. Accordingly, nature tends, etc.

Cor. In the dynamic process, nature tends to suspend all potencies of matter through mutual interaction. –Because this happens in absolute indifference (§ 30, Expl.). Now nature tends, etc. (§ above). Therefore, etc.

Remark. One might say that the dynamic process is the universal endeavor of gravity to conceal once again what it had disclosed under constraint. The magnet tends to merge its two poles, but is hindered in that endeavor only by itself (solidity). Each pole tries to coalesce with its opposite in order to conceal it; the sun, which represents only one pole over against its planets, tilts their axes and seeks to cohere with them. The earth has achieved [a measure of] coherence with its moon, as have all other planets with their moons, or at least cohesion with them at a distance. Two indifferent bodies heat one another, if they do not posit magnetism between them (totality with respect to themselves), since each posits in the other that whereby they could cohere. Two different bodies are actually connected, as if each sought to conceal its lack of totality through the other.

§ 110. *Neither through magnetism nor through electricity is the totality of the dynamic process displayed.*

Cor. 1. Magnetism expresses both positive and negative factors of one and the same body at the same time, under the form of *relative identity*; electricity displays the two factors in separate bodies, under the form of relative *duplicity*. Neither the latter nor the former is the totality of dynamic processes.²⁰⁴

Cor. 2. This totality can be displayed only through the introduction of absolute indifference, i.e., of that which in itself is neither the positive nor the negative factor of this²⁰⁵ relative indifference, nor both at once. Only in this [introduction of absolute indifference] are quantitative difference and indifference posited together, i.e., is totality established (§ 45).

§ 111. *Definition* 1. Matter is *relatively indifferent* if it is externally different²⁰⁶ and only internally indifferent; it is absolutely indifferent when it is externally and internally indifferent.

Def. 2. I also term that state of matter in which it is absolutely indifferent its potency-less state.

Cor. This potency-less state of matter is represented by water – (evident from § 95, Expl. 7).

§ 112. *The totality of dynamic processes is displayed only through the chemical process.*²⁰⁷

Preliminary Explanation. There is no intrinsic opposition between relative identity and relative duplicity; with equal correctness, we can consider the magnet to be composed of two [separate] bodies and the two bodies of the electrical process to be one (= the magnet). In the following demonstration, then, the two sides of the triangle can stand for the magnet or for the two electrical bodies.

Proof. (I) In $B \overset{A}{\triangle} C$, AB represents only the one and AC only the other factor of cohesion; totality is first produced through the introduction of the third, which in itself is absolutely indifferent, hence potency-less (§ 111, Def. 2). This follows from § 110, Cor. 2. —Now since it is gravity that is posited in cohesion under the form of A and B (§ 92), hence independently from the two (§ 6), it is indifferent relative to both of them, and therefore BC appears—water, according to § 111, Cor.—here as gravity, and is, like water, completely indifferent to both forms of being, A and B. (It is, if we may express ourselves this way, a balanced product that according to the external condition can be posited now under this form, now under that, but in each case only as the same identical [item].) —Now since of the two bodies AB and AC, one of them, e.g., AB, has increased cohesion, the other, AC, has its cohesion decreased to the same degree, while BC is indifferent to each potency, so through AB and AC—in accord with the law [stated in] § 107, Cor. 2 (since AB and AC together = the magnet, § 75) BC will be posited under the potency of + and – together, and since AC = +E and AB = -E, it will be posited *as a magnet of the two electricities*; moreover, since they exist only in separation (§ 83, Cor. 2), it will be posited as a magnet which, the moment it comes into being, separates into two. Now BC potentiated through +E = hydrogen (§ 95, Expl. 9), while BC potentiated through -E = oxygen (if one understands under “matter” not only the potency, but its substrate). —(In previously published studies I have searched for a considerable time for proofs for these latter propositions, which can be understood precisely through the former theorem [§ 112]). Accordingly, the activity posited under the form of ABC with respect to *water* is, expressed in the common parlance, a deoxidization of water, more precisely, a positing of it under both forms of being, A and B.²⁰⁸

(II) Since AB increases in cohesion through AC, while AC is diminished through AB (by hyp.[othesis]), and since each of these bodies necessarily has an endeavor to return to its [prior] state (§ 63, Cor. 1), so 1) AC²⁰⁹ [relatively] increases its cohesion once again at the expense of BC (§ 95, Expl. 10), in common parlance, it is oxidized, [while] 2) AB, which was elevated in its cohesion, is once again reduced in cohesion at the expense of BC by means of hydrogen (§ cited), and so, if previously it was oxidized, it is *deoxidized*. —Therefore the activity posited under the form of ABC with respect to the two bodies is both *oxidation* and (under given conditions) *deoxidization*.

(III) Now so-called oxygen²¹⁰ is a link in all chemical activities and an element of all chemical process, whether oxidization or deoxidization, a proposition that was advanced in my earliest writings in philosophy of nature and [whose influence] should weigh more and more upon mere empirical researchers. Hence the chemical process as such is the process established under the form of ABC.

IV) But the same formula is also the schema of the totality of the dynamic process; therefore the totality of dynamic process is exhibited only in the chemical process.

Cor. 1. The chemical process, in its primordial state, arises solely from the way two different bodies establish mutual alterations in cohesion through contact whereupon each of them reestablishes its original state at the expense of the indifferent [environment]. —This follows directly from the proof of the paragraph [above, I–IV].

Cor. 2. The universal law of this process is: of two bodies transformed under the conditions of the chemical process, the one whose cohesion is relatively diminished is *oxidized* (and so water is potentiated into oxygen), while the other which is increased in cohesion is *deoxidized* (or at all events, water is potentiated into hydrogen). —This is self-evident.

Cor. 3. Hereby, it is evident what expressions like “affinity for oxygen” etc. mean and what generally is to be understood by so-called chemical affinity.

§ 113. *The chemical process is meditated as much by magnetism as by electricity.* This is already evident from § 112, Expl. —*Differently proved:* The condition of every chemical process (§ 112, Cor. 3) is also furnished in the magnet (§ 75), whose two sides = AB and AC in the above-mentioned triangle. Therefore, etc.

Remark: Von Arnim's²¹¹ experiments [show that] the two poles of the magnet placed in contact with one another and with water oxidize the north-pole. But the north-pole of the magnet = the earth's south-pole, i.e., the pole that is diminished in its cohesion (§ 85, Cor. 1) and so is in the same state as AC.

General Explanations

1. The proof of § 112 could have been directly shown from § 69. Since the same holds for the total-magnet as for the individual one, the former will tend to collapse its extremes and revert into itself just as much as the latter. But this occurs through the chemical process which joins the extremes of the [cohesion] series (§ 94, Expl.) and unites them under one common schema.

2. It is generally known that Volta,²¹² to whom modern experimental physics owes its greatest discoveries, in experiments conducted on so-called “galvanism,”²¹³ long ago found the law that as the necessary condition for the fullest galvanic action two different solid bodies in contact with one another

are required along with a third fluid [medium]. But these are the most refined conditions of the chemical process – as is evident from the deduction (§ 112) wherein I believe I first showed *how* and *why* chemical action follows from precisely these conditions. – *That* it results from these conditions, or at least is promoted and assisted by them, was already certain from the well-known researches that *Ash*²¹⁴ made. – From this there doubtless follows not, as many had imagined, that chemical action is caused by galvanism, as if galvanism were an essence or activity of a specific and characteristic sort, but rather the reverse, *that galvanism is the chemical process itself and nothing more*, and so that the two are not linked in any causal relation, but in a relation of identity, therefore so-called galvanism must totally disappear from the list of specific forms of activity (called “processes”). There is only magnetism, electricity and the chemical process, whose purest form is the [phenomenon] previously termed “galvanism.” The question: what then is this galvanic phenomenon that the chemical process activity causes? – has not previously been addressed. The confusion that has surrounded this name in many minds will be completely dissipated once one is no longer satisfied with a mere word, but looks to the *thing itself* and observes the real *details* of the process in the so-called [galvanic] series; to this date, however, no physicist has yet exhibited these details, and the above construction is the first, and as one might well be satisfied, successful attempt to make the matter comprehensible and bring it closer to clarity.²¹⁵ —The clear conditions of nature’s action in general are discovered either by following the path of a priori construction, which by its nature abstracts from everything circumstantial, or to discover it by experiments in which happy accident or the acuity of the discoverer sets aside everything nonessential. Volta has presented the galvanic phenomenon as just such an experiment insofar as he first separated the biological part²¹⁶ of the experiment from the series and showed that the [reaction occurred in the biological specimen] as a mere moist conductor (hence in an altogether universal quality), and that the same effect could just as easily be produced across any other moist medium. Thereby the galvanic phenomenon, freed from its biological significance,²¹⁷ first became an important acquisition of general physics, and had this discovery borne no other fruit than this (to display the chemical process under its primordial conditions), it would have been reckoned among the greatest and most noteworthy discoveries ever made. – For those who are capable of the idea, no further proofs of the *identity* of galvanism and the chemical process are needed than *that the conditions of the former can be understood from the latter and can also be derived a priori from them alone*, that therefore they are really the conditions of the latter. If in the meanwhile more of our physicists further pursue the renowned utility of Volta’s ideas and experiments they will soon convince themselves and all mere empiricists too that galvanism *as* galvanism, i.e., as a distinctive form of activity, never has existed, nor can it be investigated as such in the future.

§ 114. In the chemical process are contained all other dynamic processes, not just potentially,²¹⁸ but actually;²¹⁹ this is so because the chemical process is the entirety of the dynamic process (§ 112).

Cor. 1. For this very reason, conversely, all other dynamic processes can be investigated as chemical ones. –E.g., nothing stands in the way of saying the magnetic pole which is elevated in cohesion is oxidized at the expense of its opposite.

Cor. 2. In the triangle [postulated in] § 112 carbon and nitrogen come together through AB and AC, while through BC oxygen and hydrogen are joined (§ 95, Explanation[s] 4, 5, 11); but since these exact items are the four dynamic potencies which support the whole play of the so-called process, it is again evident from this how in the chemical process, the dynamic totality or the four world-regions are united.

Cor. 3. The following general reflections about the construction may be added.

a) The schema of the three basic forms of the dynamic processes is, as is known, the line, the angle, and the triangle, or in addition, these three processes are equated with the first three prime numbers of the arithmetic series. Just as 2 results only from the addition of $1 + 1$, and 3 from the joining of 1 to 2 (so therefore these numbers are not *powers* of 1), so too, therefore, the three stages of the dynamic process [result from successive addition]. Even the chemical process arises from a triple repetition of the same 1, namely, the magnet, which in AC, AB and BC is only added to itself, and in this addition displays the first totality. Just as 1 is contained in 2, and 2 and 1 in 3, so magnetism is contained in electricity, and magnetism and electricity in the chemical process. We need only to look at the figure where ACB subsists only in the line ACB displaced in the form of the Δ to note that *in this* [phenomenon, viz. the chemical process] *we do not step beyond of the conditions of magnetism*.

b) The Δ represents the fundamental conditions of all being, AB the negative, AC the real form of being, and finally the basis or BC the *substance* or the identical posited under the form of A and B (gravity).

c) *Kiellmeyer*²²⁰ has already hinted at the law that the activity within the galvanic series, i.e., and hence within our Δ , = the difference of the degrees of affinity of both bodies to oxygen. Expressed in greater abstraction, this law reads: the moment of activity = the difference of the degrees of cohesion of AB and AC, whereby must be understood the natural degree not of active, but of passive cohesion. For real active cohesion does not subsist without different degrees of passive cohesion (§ 73). Expressed this way, this law finds no exceptions, and the table of respective exciting powers of bodies in the galvanic series fully harmonizes in this way with the cohesion-series constructed above.

§ 115. *Indifferent bodies that touch one another reciprocally posit active cohesion in themselves and also between each other.* –For they tend to heat themselves (§

84). But active cohesion is the reverse endeavor of heating (evident from § 91, Cor. 1). Hence they will establish reciprocal active cohesion in themselves, that is, magnetism (§ 68), and since this obtains reciprocally (by § 107, Cor. 2), they also reciprocally establish cohesion between them.

Remark. The proof may directly proceed from § 70 and 80. For two bodies that are indifferent cannot *jointly* produce a totality which is different (§ 74); each must therefore tend to be the totality *in reference to itself*, i.e., a magnet.

Cor. The endeavor to posit active cohesion in itself and under itself continues into the endeavor to heat itself, and persists until bodies are heated.

–*Proof.* This is so because a body is heated only insofar as it conducts heat (§ 88, Cor. 1). But all conductivity is a function of cohesion or of magnetism (§ 91 a[nd] Cor. 1). Therefore, etc.

§ 116. *Conversely, different bodies will posit only active cohesion between each other, but not reciprocally in each other.* –Regarding the first part, see § 80, Cor. 3. The second part follows from § 75. Since the two bodies together produce totality, it is not necessary for each to produce it for itself, i.e., for it to establish magnetism *in itself* (§ 70).

Expl. 1. From these theorems it is sufficiently clear why generally only *indifferent* bodies are *magnetized*, rather than only *different* bodies being *electrified*.

2. It is further evident that what one has hitherto investigated as adhesion is primarily magnetism, as least with respect to a solid body, except perhaps that this magnetism is not capable of duration as in iron, but is limited to the bare time of contact [between bodies]. The law governing all adhesion is, indifferent bodies adhere to each other most strongly, e.g., glass with glass, marble with marble, and even here in the series of so-called adhesion, iron is once again found at the top [of the list], and indeed that a (smooth) body that is slower to respond to magnetism surpasses one less responsive (steel) in strength of adhesion.^d

§ 117. *Definition.* I limit the concept of adhesion to the attachment of a fluid body to a solid one. —This is so since fluid bodies do not determine themselves to active cohesion *between themselves* (as solid body and solid body, since even in their flowing together they form no relation of cohesion), but only achieve a determination to adhesion through the latter [solid body]; in any case there is here the ground of a distinction that is not valid with respect to

d. See [Louis Bernard] Guyton's "Grundsätze der chemischen Affinität" [Berlin, 1794]. In the effect of iron on the metals nearest to it in the cohesion series (cobalt, nickel, etc), adhesion still appears under the specific form of polarity, though quite naturally the *phenomenon* (not the thing itself) disappears in proportion to the distance from the mid-point of all cohesion—which it makes visible under the form of magnetism. (*Note in original edition.*) (Guyton [1737–1816] was a chemist and politician who served revolutionary France in the National Assembly and the Committee on Public Safety, and became a provincial governor under the Directory. [Tr.]

the thing itself. This is so because the same rule governs fluid and solid bodies as governs one kind of solid and another (§ 116, Expl. 2). Thus, mercury adheres to those metals that are closest to it in specific weight and many other properties, gold and silver to the strongest, while iron, on the other hand, bonds to the weakest.

§ 118. *The moment of magnetism*²²¹ *in chemical process as such is the moment of adhesion.*²²² This is so because (§ 110, Cor. 2) chemical action *as such* is first established through the addition of the fluid body, BC, [to the solid ones, AB and AC] (§ 112). But between this AB and AC is possible (not so much cohesion as) only adhesion (§ 117). Accordingly, the moment of magnetism as such can present itself in chemical action only under the form of adhesion.

Cor. This does not deny that AC or AB themselves, if they are bodies of discernible active cohesion (e.g., copper, iron, silver), can present such a magnetic moment *in themselves*, outside of the polarity that they present in interaction. But this depends upon an accidental condition that we take no note of here.

§ 119. *The moment of electricity in the chemical process as such depends on the liquid [medium] being potentiated into oxygen and hydrogen.* It is evident from the proof of § 112.

Remark 1. From this it is clear that all the moments of the dynamic process are exhibited in liquids considered as such, or that the latter in their transformations traverse all [dynamic moments]. Water is the fluid magnet (§ 95, Cor. 4, Expl. 7) and in its unbiased state represents the²²³ indifference point. In the state of adhesion it approximates mere relative identity, in the state of separation into oxygen and hydrogen it passes over to the moment of relative duplicity. The third moment (of the chemical process *in the chemical*) will be more closely defined in a while.

Remark 2. It would be very natural if, in light of the assertion that so-called galvanism is nothing other than the chemical process itself, one would be led to the grand concordance that undoubtedly obtains between galvanic and electrical phenomena. For what has also been advanced counter to this harmony is of no significance, since, e.g., bodies that prove to be the poorest conductors for the strongest galvanism are not weaker conductors for the strongest *electricity*, like ethyl alcohol and others. But this concordance is already comprehensible from theorem § 114. The so-called galvanic process is at once magnetism, electricity, and chemical process (the last understood in the narrow sense). See this journal, vol. I, issue 2, p. 77. But precisely because it is these [three all at once], galvanism is the chemical process itself displayed in the totality of its conditions, under which too electricity is necessarily displayed. Accordingly, it is equally necessary that the voltaic battery produce the most surprising²²⁴ electrical phenomena and the most important chemical ones as well.

But before we can discuss this, we must first say something about the construction of this remarkable totality which contains forever bound the Proteus

who in the dynamic process deceptively appears in so many different forms. In this matter, we make an exception to the general rule of this presentation, in part because of the magnitude of the discovery which is the greatest and most extensive for this field, as will subsequently become apparent, in part too because all [empirical] physicists for whom the meaning and process of the simple galvanic series remains hidden might find a more elaborate construction of the totality even more puzzling, or, if they have understood it through what was explained above (§ 112, Expl.), its application to a more complicated case could still seem difficult to them. But it is important that the true view of this discovery be expressed straightaway. This battery has already forced one of the (English) researchers at work on the subject to abandon his previous hypotheses about electrical matter (and virtually his whole previous system of physics), a result so excellent that it could not have been anticipated.

Since totality is produced all at once in the dynamic process (through chemical process), so in this sphere or potency nothing more happens than the continuous addition of the totality to itself, which proceeds indefinitely, though it can never pass beyond this very potency. This is what happens with respect to the dynamic process in the voltaic battery.²²⁵ Now it is not yet sufficiently understood how both the activity inside this [relative] totality is enhanced by mere addition and that activity as well that is perpetuated outside of it; one must add to the account the fact that *inside* the totality, every member is at the same time a link in the three so-called series,²²⁶ and hence exists in three processes, each of which is for itself already independent and a totality. —Now since every member of the totality is already found in another with which it is pregnant or which it has already become, and in this way attaches itself to the whole, it is understandable how one and the same power achieves an ascertainable intensity through continuous increase, and how finally the most distant members of the series can step forth as representative of the entire + and – of the process at the opposite ends A and B [of a line]. If one extends the series from these points, one will see that A and B in new combination initiate the process [anew] with a force that usually is the product of the process—and from this one will doubtless understand—with fluctuation and upheaval and—one might almost say active conflagration of everything internally and (perhaps) illimitable force externally.

Inside the totality, however, the process occurs by means of a purely immaterial potency (that of cohesion) according to the laws described above and has absolutely nothing to do with its matter, even if one terms it “imponderable”²²⁷ (which only increases the absurdity of the expression); above all, one wishes that the physicists would give up their previous ideas about conduction and conductivity in order to harmoniously conceive this living totality.

If we reflect on the inner [dimension] of each, the very same thing happens inside each part-whole as happens in the total-whole, and the latter contains

no more than what is contained in the former. The body that is increased in cohesion determines water to [the state of] water potentiated by +E, the one decreased in cohesion (in order to restore itself by means of this reduction) is determined to water potentiated by –E (oxygen); it is oxidized. Only the two outermost links of the chain, when it is not closed [into a figure], remain isolated with their + and -. Accordingly, they *can* present none other than electrical appearances (since a *third* [medium] is lacking), though these phenomena doubtless appear under that form in which they previously presented themselves; only with the addition of a third [item] (e.g., water) are the conditions of the chemical process with respect to the whole fully given; but then it completely occurs by the instantaneous exhaustion of the liquid element through oxidization or deoxidization, depending on the individual circumstances. –This much will doubtless suffice to indicate in a preliminary way the viewpoint from which this remarkable subject is to be surveyed.

§ 120. *Even if it acts in all dimensions, the chemical process affects mere cohesion in all of them. –Proof.* This is so because cohesion is the boundary of all chemical action (§ 94, Cor.).

Otherwise [proved]: because even the chemical Δ is reducible to the straight line (§ 114, Cor. 3. a); the entire dynamic process stands under the schema of magnetism (§ 65), hence, of cohesion (§ 67), or what is again the same, of mere addition (§ 95, Cor. 5).

Remark: Hence it is to be expected that the ultimate ground of all arithmetic lies here.^e

§ 121. *Bodies are not altered in substance through the chemical process, but merely in their accidents.* This is so because the process affects only cohesion. But what is posited through cohesion is not substance (which pertains to the power of gravity²²⁸), but the mere accidents of it (§ 70, Remark). Therefore only accidental features will be altered through the dynamic process. But the substance exists independent of the accidents (*ibid.*); so it cannot be altered through alterations of accidents, and accordingly it is unalterable by chemical process.

§ 122. *All so-called qualities of matter are mere potencies of cohesion.* –The proof includes everything previously stated. For a more ample discussion, see the *Abhandlung von dynamischen Proceß*, vol. I of this journal.

§ 123. *The substance of every body is completely independent of its qualities and is not determined by them.* –Evident from § 122, comp.[are] with 121.

Remark 1. Hence, e.g., what one calls nitrogen and carbon are entirely the same in substance, even if their powers²²⁹ are opposite. The relative “in-itself”

e. A thought that Herr Eschenmayer also expressed to me on the occasion of the “Abhandlung von dynamische Proceß” (Vol. 1, issues 1 & 2).

of the two is the one and the same indifferent [item] viewed as substance, namely iron.

Remark 2. So even here matter is subject to the universal law of being. For, apart from the potency under which it is posited, all being is one (§ 12, Cor. 1)

Remark 3. Therefore, if one abstracts from its potency, the being of matter is identical to universal being, and entirely the same as it.

§ 124. *No body is composite in substance.* —This is so because in substance it is absolute identity itself (§ 123, Remark 3).

Cor. 1. So too whatever can be divided or decomposed is not destroyed in substance. This follows from the § [above], cp., § 34, Cor.

Explanation. So it would be false, e.g., to say that metals consist in or are compounded from carbon and nitrogen. For these two are mere forms of existence of one and the same identical [item] and are not themselves that which exists.²³⁰

Cor. 2. That a body is chemically decomposed or resolved means: the one identical existent is posited under different forms of existence.

Remark. The so-called elements²³¹ that are supposed to compose bodies are therefore first established through decomposition, and are products of decomposition.

Cor. 3. From this it follows that a body, even if it can be decomposed, is still not composite, but is one.

§ 125. *All matter is internally identical and is differentiated merely in its externally directed pole.* —This is so because it is not different in essence (§ 12, Cor. 1) or in substance (§ 123, Remark 2), but merely in its form of existence. But the form of existence as such is cohesion (§ 92, compare with § 70, Remark); hence the sole form of existence is *polarity*²³² (§ 68), accordingly bodies are differentiated merely through the pole under which they exist or (since the essence of a thing is the internal dimension, its existence the external) through the pole whereby it acts externally.

Expl. 1. Thus, e.g., an acid and an alkali are in themselves perfectly indifferent and doubtless are differentiated (at least in the process of neutralization, because every moment of it alters [their] accidents) merely in that the former turns the hydrogen-pole, the latter the oxygen-pole toward the outside. —Substance escapes our notice in just this action, since every body can be altered only by another (§ 36), and since in every moment of the process it is another in terms of its form of existence, without pure and formless essence ever being able to come forward.

2. The *inward*-acting pole of each body can also be called the *potentiated*, the outward-acting one the *potentiating* [pole].

§ 126. *In no process can anything enter a body that is not already there potentially.*²³³ —This was previously proved for magnetic (§ 115), electrical, and

heat processes (§ 86, 88). A body, e.g., conducts its *own* heat and electricity, not that of another body. [That the same holds] for the chemical process follows directly from § 69, Cor. 1. For all [properties] that are established in a body through the chemical process are mere potencies of cohesion (§ 120), but since all other substances²³⁴ are contained in each single one, and since all substances are differentiated from each other only by the potencies of cohesion (§ 125), this says as much as: all potencies of cohesion are already *virtually* contained in every substance; hence etc.

Expl. So, e.g., a body that is oxidized surely coheres with (or is bound to) a substance whose potency is the negative factor of cohesion (oxygen); but oxygen, whereby this substance acts externally, is its own $-[E]$ that first comes into effect when its $+E$ is limited or annulled by an external potency. This notion applies to every chemical process.

Cor. 1. Every body is a monad.

Cor. 2. Nothing that arises in the chemical process is intrinsically an origination, but merely a metamorphosis (§ 78).

§ 127. *The universal tendency of the chemical process is to turn all substances into water.* —This is so because nature's tendency is to reciprocally annul and extinguish all dynamic potencies through each other, hence to produce absolute (dynamic) indifference. But this state exists only in water (§ 95, Cor. 4, Expl. 7). So within the chemical process, nature moves toward the production of water or the transformation of all substances into water.

Cor. 1. In this tendency the chemical process is limited only by active cohesion, which once established²³⁵ cannot be cancelled, and constructing power in general is entangled in an eternal contradiction in the universal chemical process whereby it annuls every dynamic potency though its opposite, but can never remove the opposite without again positing its opposite: it is therefore impossible that it ever (in this potency) attain its end, but through precisely this contradiction all bodies are intertwined into a *universal reciprocity* (and so at all events into a relative totality).

Corollary 2. Since water belongs to no potency²³⁶ (§ 111, Cor.), but all dynamic potencies are powers of cohesion, so water is *entirely depotentiated* iron.

§ 128. *Lemma. Acids* should be viewed as intermediate steps in the transition from solid substances into the powerless²³⁷ state (water).

Cor. From this it follows that the so-called radical of every acid must either be a solid body or the sort of substance that at least functions as a factor of active cohesion.

Remark. For the factors of *passive* cohesion actually reduce each other to indifference (§ 95, Expl.) and *no* acid arises from this situation. —The primary acids are carbonic acid and nitric acid. Secondary acids have a solid body as a basis (sulfur [in sulfuric acid]) or a metal (as, apparently, hydrochloric acid²³⁸ does).

§ 129. *The chemical process²³⁹ inside the chemical process is the transition from oxygen and hydrogen to absolute indifference, i.e., to water (§ 119). This directly follows from the above [theorems and corollaries, § 127 ff.].*

Cor. 1. This transition is necessarily tied to the presence of light. –For its two *modi existendi*²⁴⁰ (§ 103, Remark), +E and –E, which mutually cancel each other, are given (§ 95, Corollary 10).

Cor. 2. Hence, this transition is combustion.²⁴¹

§ 130. *The basic law of all chemical process is that the body that is reduced in cohesion to a measurable degree is oxidized.* —Evident from the first construction, § 112.

Remark. With respect to the universal law it is all the same whether the reduction of cohesion occurs through the most primitive form of the chemical process²⁴² (§ cit.), or through an electrical spark, or through the direct action of heat.

§ 131. *All chemical composition is the depotentiation of matter.* —This is so because in all so-called composition, nature aims at reciprocally suspending opposite potencies of matter (§ 109, Cor.) or at producing water (§ 127). Therefore (§ 127, Cor. 2), every so-called composition is a (more or less accomplished) depotentiation of matter.

Corollary. From this it follows, conversely, that *every so-called decomposition is a potentiation of matter*, which can also be directly understood from § 124, Cor. 2.

§ 132. *Oxidization (e.g., of a metal) cannot be the basis of solution.* This is so because the latter is the reduction of cohesion, while the former enhances cohesion (§ 95. Expl. 10). Therefore, etc.

Cor. 1. Accordingly one must say just the reverse, that carbon (in the diamond), metal, etc, tends to resist reduction [in cohesion] insofar as it is oxidized, and if it is reduced it is not because it is oxidized, but because it has been continually reduced in its cohesion.

Cor. 2. A body that is oxidized becomes specifically lighter insofar as it becomes absolutely heavier. –This follows from what was just considered, and from § 72.

Cor. 3. An acid is in itself completely identical (§ 124, Corollary 3), therefore also not acid; it is acid only in contrast to a body that tends to increase its cohesion.

Cor. 4. *The decomposition of metal in acid occurs according to the universal schema of the chemical process* § 112. If, e.g., there is the decomposing metal silver, and nitric acid as the dissolving agent, carbon and nitrogen are in contact with each other and with water, i.e., the totality of the chemical process is given (§ 114, Cor. 2).

§ 133. *Acids too in their action upon metals follow the universal law of polarity*, namely that only opposite poles work in opposite directions.

Cor. 1. Opposite the metal of the carbon-pole is ranged the acid of the nitrogen-pole, and opposite the metal of this latter pole is ranged the acid of the carbon-pole.

Cor. 2. *Iron is attacked by all acids, even mere water.* The first part is evident from the above §, cp., § 76, the second part from § 113.

§ 134. *Absolute indifference can only produce the factors of passive cohesion, not of active.*

Cor. *It is necessary that chemical metamorphosis²⁴³ proceed in opposite directions and end in free-standing poles.* Since the chemical process ends in the production of absolute indifference, while this latter is possible only with respect to the potencies of passive cohesion, but not of active cohesion (§ above), so the series of chemical products ends in opposite poles—where one represents one factor of a[ctive] c[ohesion], the other the other factor—which are futilely placed side by side in the chemical process.

§ 135. *It is not the dynamic process that is the essentially real,²⁴⁴ but the dynamic totality²⁴⁵ [reciprocity] that is posited by it,* because in general only the totality is essentially real (§ 50, Explanation).

Remark. The honor of presenting this totality with respect to the terrestrial bodies goes to *Steffens* in his oft-cited *Beiträge*.²⁴⁶ Using a sharp-sighted combination of facts, he was the first to explain the result that the [chemical] earths (the greatest products of the chemical, hence the second metamorphosis) form opposed series, of which one (the heat-hardened series) represents the carbon-pole, the other (the cool-hardened) the nitrogen-pole.

§ 136. *Directly through the positing of the dynamic totality is posited the addition of light as its product, i.e., the relative totality of the whole potency is posited (§ 58, Cor. 8, Remark).* —*Proof:* since light as the ideal principle finds its limit directly through relative totality being posited (§ 94, Corollary, cp., § 134), it ceases to be immediately ideal and becomes real, or appears as a product (§ 58).

Corollary 1. The expression of the total-product²⁴⁷ is therefore light united to gravity.

Corollary 2. The unique reality²⁴⁸ of this potency is the total-product (§ 58, Cor. 8, Expl. 3).

§ 137. *Directly through the establishment of relative totality in the whole potency (§ 58, Cor. 8, Remark), gravity is posited as a mere form²⁴⁹ of being of absolute identity.* This is so because just as by the position of $A = B$ as relative totality, A^2 is established (§ cit., Cor. 7), so A^3 is established by the position of $A^2 = (A = B)$; but A^3 is absolute identity insofar as it is posited as existing under the form of being of A^2 and $A = B$. Therefore, etc.

Explanation. Gravity is absolute identity not in so far as it *is*, but insofar as it contains the ground of its being (§ 54, Remark). Now in cohesion it is posited as subsistent (§ 92). But it cannot be established as absolute identity,

since being belongs to the essence of identity (§ 8, Cor. 1), while what pertains to the essence of gravity, on the contrary, is not *to be*. Therefore it cannot be posited as existing *in itself*, while it is also posited merely as existing insofar as absolute identity is posited as light (§ 94), which too does not subsist in itself (§ 98); and since it therefore cannot generally be posited as existing in itself, it can only be posited as a *form of being* of absolute identity (§ 15, Cor. 2), which is exactly what happens in the relative totality of this potency.

From this it is also clear that the entire activity of this (dynamical) potency arises from the positing of gravity as the form²⁵⁰ of being of absolute identity, which can occur only by means of its relative opposition to A^2 (the other form of being), therefore only by means of the dynamical process, though this latter occurs not with respect to the totality of this potency (i.e., not in itself), but only in the particular perspective, or outside of the totality of this potency (§ 27).

§ 138. *By being posited as a mere form of being of absolute identity, gravity itself is posited as accidental.* –This is evident from § 70, Remark.

Cor. A^3 is therefore the substantial reality²⁵¹ in relation to gravity.

§ 139. *Definition.* That gravity is posited as accidental with respect to absolute identity means: it is posited as a mere potency (§ 64, Def. 1) or as a mere pole [of activity]. Regarding the latter, s.[ee] the proof of § 125.

Remark. Consequently, we can express more precisely than before the relationship between the original process of transformation²⁵² (§ 95) and what we have called the second [series], which is first established through the dynamical and then the chemical process: “original process of transformation” indicates the gradual establishment of gravity as a mere form of the being of absolute identity; within this sphere absolute identity subsists only as *light* (A^2), while gravity is established neither as gravity nor as mere power. Gravity itself, however, is the direct cause of the first process of transformation, or the immediately positing agent in this first series which contains all primordial matters. The direct cause of the second series of transformations, on the other hand, is [the explicit or active form of] gravity which, since it is torn from its resting state through the first process of transformation seeks to cancel the potencies under which it is posited through the magnetic, electrical, and (in the totality) chemical processes.

§ 140. *Gravity can be posited as a mere power or pole [of activity] only in opposite directions;*²⁵³ this directly follows [from the above §].

This is so because the concept of *direction* is already included in the concept of pole. Now since gravity is in itself indifferent, there is no reason for its being posited primarily in one direction, it will necessarily be established in the same manner in opposite directions.

Corollary. This law holds unto infinity,²⁵⁴ as do all the laws of the being of absolute identity. Therefore it holds for the individual just as it does for the whole.

§ 141. *Lemma.* The opposite poles under which gravity is established in identical fashion as the form of existence of absolute identity are, with respect to the whole, *plant* and *animal*, and with respect to the individual, the *two sexes*.

Remark: The reader will forgive us if we, here, as previously, take the shortest way to our end and put forth statements as lemmata or unproven assertions whose proof one is capable of discovering for oneself through reflection. It should also be understood that a more thorough discussion of the above statement will be emerge in what follows.

Corollary 1. From this it is evident that the total-product is the organism (§ 136, Cor. 1).

2. Just as the entire dynamic potency is subject to the schema of relative identity (§ 125, Pr.[oof]) so the entire organic potency falls under that of relative duplicity. This is clarified by § 50, Explanation 3.

Remark. We do not find it necessary to repeat the particular schema of this potency, since it is completely identical with that of the first and second (§ 50, 58).

§ 142. *Absolute identity is the immediate cause of the organism by positing A^2 and $A = B$ as forms of its being, i.e., directly by positing itself as existing under the form of each of them.* The proof is everything [presented] to this point.

§ 143. *Def.* Absolute identity, insofar as it posits itself as existing under the form of A^2 (§ 96) and that of $A = B$ (§ 52) is efficacy.²⁵⁵ This is so because efficacy is power raised to activity or the identity of power and activity.

§ 144. *The efficacy whereby the organism exists arises not from the conservation of substance as such, but from substance as the form of existence of absolute identity.* —This is so because substance ($A = B$) with respect to the organism is itself a mere form of existence (§ 137), therefore, etc. Otherwise [proved]. In the primum exists²⁵⁶ the power whereby it exists arises simply from substance, which cannot be increased or diminished, much less annihilated, whatever changes it undergoes (§ 34, Corollary 2). But in no way is the organism an organism through the substance (which is unchangeable), but through the mode or form of being of absolute identity (§ 142). All the efficacy of the organism arises, therefore, from the conservation of substance as a form of existence, hence not from substance as substance.

§ 145. *The cause by which the substance (the $A = B$) of the organism is conserved as substance necessarily lies outside of it.* —This follows directly from § 144.

Definition. It has been explained above how we provisionally understand by “nature” absolute identity insofar as it *actually* exists under the form of being of A and B (§ 61). Now it exists as such only in cohesion and light. But since through cohesion and light, it is the ground of its being as A^3 , just as through gravity it was the ground of its being as A^2 , and since as A^3

it is again the ground of its being (in a still higher potency), we can say in general: we understand by “nature” absolute identity as such, considered not insofar as it is subsistent, but as the ground of its being, and from this we anticipate that we will call everything “nature” that lies outside the absolute being of absolute identity.²⁵⁷

Cor. 1. In accordance with this we can say: the cause by which the substance of the organism is conserved as substance lies within nature.

Cor. 2. Since the organism’s efficacy (§ 144) arises simply from positing A^2 and $A = B$ (substance) as forms²⁵⁸ of its existence, while $A = B$ as substance can only be given to it from the outside,²⁵⁹ therefore the organism is determined to efficacy from without.

Definition. This process of being determined, etc., is becoming sensitized or excited. Further, since the reason that $A = B$ with respect to the organism is a simple form²⁶⁰ of existence lies in its identity with A^2 (§ 137), and since this includes the reason that the substance of the organism must be provided from without, i.e., that it must be externally determined to its efficacy, therefore A^2 in its identity with $A = B$ must be conceived as *sensitivity*,²⁶¹ while the efficacy itself whereby the two are established as forms of existence of the organism—(since the organism is merely the ground of the possibility of the efficacy, and since the determination to efficacy is expected from without)—is conceived as the organism’s *capacity for indifference*.

Cor. 3. We see quite well that the living organism’s capacity for indifference is one and the same with the cause whereby light is posited alongside with gravity, each equally and together jointly as the form of existence of absolute identity; at the same time we understand quite precisely that absolute identity is just as much the direct cause of organism (or the ground of the common reality of A^2 and $A = B$) as it is the ground of A and B in the *Primum Existens*²⁶² (§ 53). The organism is therefore the *secundum Existens*,²⁶³ and since absolute identity as the immediate cause of the organism is again the ground of its existence, so it presents itself anew as the “gravity” of the higher potency (§ 54). —Consequently, absolute identity as ground of its own being precedes itself insofar as it exists, and we therefore also follow gravity through the whole series, as if it were the maternal principle which, impregnated by absolute identity, brings forth itself; it is evident from the whole [of nature] that the organism is just as primordial as is matter, but also that it is just as impossible to empirically present the first burst of light within gravity as it is to present the first breakthrough of the ideal principle into what is simply real (§ cit., Remark).

Def. 2. The formula $A^2 = (A = B)$, understood as relative totality, denotes absolute identity not insofar as it exists, but insofar as it is ground or cause of its existence by means of the organism, so too by means of the organism itself [as product]. The formula $A^3 = [A^2 = (A = B)]$ ²⁶⁴ denotes absolute identity existing under the form of A^2 and $A = B$ ([the substance] of the organism). —This follows from the preceding [corollary].

Cor. 4. The formula $A^2 = (A = B)$ intrinsically denotes sensitivity as well as the capacity for indifference (Def. 1 [above], comp.[are] with [Def.] 2). Since these two [faculties of the organism] are expressed by one and the same identity, they are therefore one and the same thing viewed from different sides.

Def. 3. In the preceding [corollary] lies the reason that the formula $A^2 = (A = B)$ can also be considered to express equilibrium in excitation.

Cor. 5. Organic indifference (Def. 1) and so equilibrium in excitation (Def. 3) is health.

§ 146. *The organism as such is a totality, not just with respect to itself, but absolutely.* —This is so because absolute identity exists directly through it (§ 145, Def. 2) and it exists only *as* totality (§ 26). Therefore, etc.

Remark. The organism, however, is not absolute totality, for the identity that exists through it is only the identity of *this* potency. Here one can clearly see how identity and totality are related. —Light, e.g., is existing identity, but it is not totality, because absolute totality subsists only under the form of the existing identity of all potencies (§ 43), the totality of this [third, organic] potency is therefore identity existing under the form of A^2 and $A = B$.

Cor. With respect to the organism, substance is also accident (§ 70, Remark), effect is also cause (§ 83, Cor. 4); and it immediately subsists only in reciprocal interaction with itself (§ 127, Cor. 1). —All opposites as such pertain only to the sphere of relative opposition between A^2 and $A = B$, which [that sphere and the opposites] are suspended at one stroke in the organism (§ 137, Expl.).

§ 147. *Def.* Matter insofar as it is not raised to the form of existence of absolute identity we call lifeless or inorganic matter. Matter that is the form of being of absolute identity is *animated*.

Cor. From this it is clear how the organism, since it is the form of existence of absolute identity, can exist not on account of any external thing or purpose, but only for its own sake, i.e., hence that absolute identity exists under its form.

§ 148. *Inorganic nature does not exist as such.* This is so because the sole intrinsic reality²⁶⁵ of this potency is the totality (§ 58, Cor. 8, Expl. 3), i.e., the organism.

Remark. So-called inorganic nature is actually organized, and indeed subsists for the sake of organization (as if it were the universal seed from which this sprouts).

§ 149. *Lemma* 1. The heavenly bodies²⁶⁶ are the organs of the world's universal intuiting principle, or of absolute identity, which is the same thing.

2. Every heavenly body considered in itself is a totality, hence in contrast to every other, a self-enclosed individual determined in every respect.

3. Just as the world's intuiting principle is individualized in the heavenly body, so the intuiting principle of the heavenly body is individualized in the organism.

4. The central body of every [planetary] system contains the identity (the $A = A$) of this system, and it is therefore (1.) the central organ of the intuiting principle or of the absolute identity for this system.

§ 150. *The organism articulates matter not only in its accidents but also in its substance.* This is so because it establishes the whole substance of matter²⁶⁷ [merely] as accident (§ 137).

Cor. Otherwise stated (by § 137), it forces matter to turn the inner (as pole [of activity]) outward. —Hence it enters most intimately into the existence of matter.

§ 151. *Organization, in the individual as well as in the whole, must be conceived as coming to be through metamorphosis.* —Evident from § 140, comp. [are] with 78.

Cor. Accordingly, organization can be viewed both in the whole and in the individual entity as a magnet.

§ 152. *Lemma.* With respect to the whole, the plant represents the carbon-pole, the animal the nitrogen-pole.²⁶⁸ The animal is therefore southerly, the plant northerly. With respect to the particular, the masculine sex is signified by the latter [nitrogen-] pole, the feminine by the former [carbon-pole].

Cor. The masculine and feminine sexes are related in the particular as the plant and the animal are in the universal.

§ 153a. *The organization of every heavenly body (e.g., the earth) is the outward elaboration of the inner dimension²⁶⁹ of this heavenly body and it is formed through internal transformation (e.g., of the earth).* —This follows from § 150, *Cor.* a.[nd] 151.

Explanation. The difficulties one has encountered up to now in conceiving a first origin of organization from the inside of every heavenly body primarily had their ground in the situation that one neither had a cogent idea of metamorphosis nor of the primordial but already dynamically organized state of every heavenly body (§ 148, Remark); hence even Kant regarded the idea that all organized entities, e.g., the earth, were born from their own womb as quixotic or almost frightful. This idea follows necessarily from our fundamental principles, and in a natural way. We ask those [readers] who have not yet come to trust this idea only this, to first merely distance themselves from false opinions that most people embrace, e.g., that the earth has brought forth animals and plants (and that therefore there is a genuine causal relation between the two, whereas there is instead a perfect relation of identity. Earth itself becomes animal and plant,²⁷⁰ and it is precisely the earth evolved into animal and plant that we now perceive in organized entities). Then, further, [we ask that one put aside the false view that], as we have [usually] imagined, that the organic entity as such arises from the inorganic (since we absolutely do not concede this, or that perhaps the organized entity has come to be, but rather conceive the organism as present and existing from the beginning, at least *potentia*²⁷¹). —The seemingly inorganic matter lying before us is surely not *that matter* from which animals and plants have developed or which could be altered to the point where it could become organic, hence the residue of organic metamorphosis; as Steffens presents it, the

externally twisted skeleton of the entire organic world. –But in general keep in mind that we have not at all conceded the usual and up to now predominant notion of matter, while one can understand from the above that we maintain an inner identity of all things and a potential presence of everything in everything, and that we therefore consider so-called lifeless matter itself as a sleeping animate- and plant-realm, which though animated by the being²⁷² of absolute identity, can fail to participate [in that life] for such a duration where it lacks experience. For us, the earth is nothing other than the epitome or totality of the animal and plant, and, if the former stands for the positive-pole, and the latter the negative-, the earth itself is the bare indifference-point of the organic magnet (hence itself organic).

§ 153b. *Organic nature is different from so-called inorganic nature merely in this, that in the former, every level of development²⁷³ is characterized by an indifference, while in the latter, by relative difference* (that of sex).

Cor. If so-called inorganic matter is externally different, but internally indifferent (§ 125), organic matter is the reverse, internally different, externally indifferent. Hence there is no intrinsic opposition here, but merely an opposition in orientation.²⁷⁴

§ 154. *Nitrogen is the real form of being of absolute identity.* —This is so because it is the positive factor in cohesion (§ 95, Cor. 4, Expl. 5).

Cor. 1. Hence the animal is preeminently animated (§ 152).

Remark. This is also the ground of animal warmth.

2. Through all of nature, the male sex is the animating or procreative [agent] (§ cit.). The female is the producer²⁷⁵ of plants whose propagation is mediated by a higher cohesion-process.

3. The plant is animated only by the species, for only through the species does it attain to the presentation of the real form of being, and hence to life (§ 147); the animal is alive independently of the species.

§ 155. *The species, which connects the plant to the sun, fastens the animal to the earth.* —This is so because the plant, originally in concrescence with the earth (§ 95, Expl. 6), is from the earth's perspective bound to absolute identity, hence *to the sun* (§ 149, Lemma 4) only through the species (§ 154, Cor. 3). In the case of the animal, on the contrary, which is linked to absolute identity, hence to the sun, independently of the species, species instead become the means of cohesion with the earth.

§ 156. *The potentiated positive pole of the earth is the animal's brain, and among these, the human brain.* This is so because, since the law of metamorphosis holds not only with respect to the entirety of organized entities, but also with respect to the individual, and the animal is the positive pole (nitrogen) of the universal transformation, so in the animal itself the highest product of transformation will be the most perfect, i.e., most potentiated positive pole. But the brain, as is known, is the highest product, etc. Therefore, etc.

Remark 1. The proof of this proposition is certainly not to be pursued by chemical analysis, for reasons that shortly will be comprehended in general. –Meanwhile the proposition was already advanced by *Steffens*, at least indirectly. [See] vol. 1 of *this journal*, issue 2, p. 117.

Remark 2. As can easily be seen from the foregoing, the process of transformation in the animal kingdom necessarily tends toward a thoroughgoing presentation of nitrogen in its purest and most potentiated form. –In the highly developed animal, this continually happens through the process of digestion, of respiration, which merely serve to purify the blood of carbon; it happens more quietly and no longer in a steady and unbroken process in so-called voluntary motion, as if nature had already achieved a state of rest. –The first stationary animal already exhibits the entirely self-articulated earth; while [in the animal] with the most developed brain mass and nervous tissue its innermost [potential] is developed, the purest gift the earth can offer the sun, as it were.

Cor. 1. The species is the root of the animal. The flower is the brain of the plant.

Remark. Closer to the earth and almost more directly sympathetic to it is the sex closely allied to the plant,²⁷⁶ the female, and only through her the animal, namely the masculine sex. —Since every heavenly body is a distinct individual (§ 149, Lemma 2), so the character of each them will incline more to the masculine or more to the feminine, or, like the earth which traces its orbit between Venus and Mars, it will unite both within itself in a more perfect indifference.

Cor. 2. Just as the plant bursts forth in the bloom, so the entire earth blossoms in the human brain, which is the most sublime flower of the entire process of organic metamorphosis.

Cor. 3. Just as the plant coheres with the sun through its bloom (which the plant's "thirst" for light, the movements of its stamen induced by light, prove), so the animal coheres with the sun through its brain. With the most perfect development of the brain [in the animal, the upright stance of] the plant is totally reversed, and not until humankind does the organized entity again become erect.

Cor. 4. In the animal, indifference locks onto the earth, in plants, it attaches to the sun.

Cor. 5. Just as the most advanced brain development occurs along one pole of the universal metamorphosis, so necessarily along the opposite pole occurs the most imperfect sexual development (cryptogamy²⁷⁷). –This is readily understood from the preceding [theorem and corollaries].

§ 157. *Within organic nature, the animal is iron, the plant water.* —This is so because the former starts from relative division (of the sexes). The latter ends in it.

Cor. 1. The animal decomposes iron, the plant water.

Cor. 2. The feminine and masculine element²⁷⁸ of the plant is {respectively} the carbon and nitrogen of water (§ 95, Expl. 13). Follows directly [from the theorem cited].

§ 158. *Definition.* I term equilibrium in excitation (§ 145, Def. 3) the quantitative or arithmetic equilibrium of A^2 and $A = B$.

§ 159. *Beyond the quantitative equilibrium of A^2 and $A = B$ there is necessarily yet another relation between the two.* —This is so because the quantitative relation of the two characterizes the organism in general (§ cit., Def. 2). But the organism is subject to the law of metamorphosis just as much as in the entirety [of nature] as in individuals (§ 151). Since this formula²⁷⁹ is the characteristic expression of the organism [as such], yet another relationship between the two must be possible which expresses different levels of transformation in the totality and in the individual as well.

Cor. 1. This relationship of the two factors can be none other than that which they receive in connection to the [spatial] dimensions of matter.

Remark. In the process of metamorphosis, light plays with gravity, as it were. Now since this latter as the defining characteristic of substance governs the third dimension, so metamorphosis first arrives at the point of fulfillment in the individual as well as in the totality, where substance in all dimensions is established as the mere form of existence of absolute identity.

Cor. 2. Therefore if this first quantitative relation is the ratio of the two {viz., A^2 and $A = B$ } in reference to the organism as the ground of existence of absolute identity, then the second, precisely as defined, is the relation of the two to existing absolute identity itself. The former may be called the ratio of excitation or stimulation,²⁸⁰ the latter the ratio of transformation.^{f,281}

f. We must break off our presentation at this point for now. Time and circumstances do not permit a prompt continuation [of this project] in a subsequent Issue [of this journal]; nor does the [current] state of affairs and the necessity to elaborate certain points more explicitly, as we wish to do, permit us to offer them in a more concentrated form. While admittedly for one who wants to learn this system and then form a judgment about it, there is the disadvantage that the whole document is not at once available, yet for those who do not express the feeling that they have already grasped the sense of the whole from this fragment (which is not impossible), this is but a cause for deciding not to overreach in their judgment. But those who express this sentiment, and I believe this will be the case for the majority of my readers, and who can anticipate my presentation in their own thoughts, would follow it with greater aptitude if I could pursue it from the stage of organic nature to the other where the most sublime expression of activity [is found], to the construction of absolute indifference or to that point where absolute identity is established under perfectly equal potencies. If I could summon them from this point to the construction of the ideal series and again go through the three potencies that are positive with respect to ideal factors just as I now rehearse these three that are negative with respect to them, I could arrive at the absolute center of gravity wherein *truth* and *beauty* coincide as the two highest expressions of indifference.

*Further Presentations from the
System of Philosophy (1802) [Extract]*

II

Proof That There Is a Point Where Knowledge of the Absolute
and the Absolute Itself Are One.

Without any further introduction to pure intuition, a geometer immediately sets about his construction; and even his postulates are not requirements for this intuition as such, about which it is presumed there can be no doubt or ambiguity, but are requisites for determinate intuitions.

In the same way, intellectual or rational intuition is something fixed and decided for the philosopher in rigorously scientific construction, something about which neither doubt is allowed nor explanation found necessary. It is that which simply and without challenge is presupposed, and can in this respect not even be called the postulate of philosophy.

Perhaps one might ask of it the question that Plato asked of virtue: can it be learned or not, can it be attained through practice, or is it perhaps to be acquired neither through instruction nor through industry, but is inborn in us by nature, or is it lent to humans through a divine disposition²⁸²?

Clearly it is nothing that can be learned; all attempts to teach it, therefore, are entirely useless in rigorously scientific philosophy, and introductions to it, since they necessarily serve as a doorway to philosophy and fashion preliminary expositions and the like, should not be sought within strict science.

Nor is it comprehensible why philosophy should be charged with an inability in this respect; instead, it is appropriate to sharply restrict access to philosophy, to isolate it on all sides from ordinary knowledge, until one could find no road or even footpath leading from it to philosophy. Philosophy begins here [with intellectual intuition], and whoever is not already at this point or shrinks back from it remains distant, or even flees from it.

The condition of the scientific spirit in general and in all the divisions of knowledge is not just a transitory intellectual intuition, but one that endures as the unchangeable organ of knowledge. For it is simply the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, the two united in a living unity. The anatomist who dissects a plant or an animal body surely believes he immediately sees the plant or the animal organism, but strictly speaking he sees only the individual thing he designates plant or body. To see the plant in the plant, the organism in the organism, in a word to see the concept or indifference within difference is possible only through intellectual intuition.

For our present purpose we shall determine the nature and essence of intellectual intuition [only] to the extent necessary to understand what it is not, to separate it from what people have called intellectual intuition, but either has nothing in common with it or is but a particular species of it.

The presence²⁸³ even in its bare idea of a philosophy in and for itself shows the necessity of assuming that the knowledge one obtains through the usual ways is not true knowledge, and since philosophy strives to discover the grounds and conditions of the science to which evidence²⁸⁴ is ascribed in another respect, [viz.,] mathematics, this shows that with the postulation of philosophy [as absolute science] we also assume the merely conditioned truth of this other body of knowledge.

What follows is the general groundwork for the discovery of philosophy.

Of whatever sort our native capacity of knowledge may be, this much at least is clear, it is established in necessary connection to some merely finite existence and is a knowledge reflecting this finite [item]. But finally (this too can be immediately appreciated) this finite existence again subsists only for us [but] in connection to and in contrast with an infinite factor. This infinite factor, which we can also call *the ideal*, is neither limited nor capable of limitation, while the finite is forever, always, and unto infinity only a determinate something.

Thereby is established in consciousness itself the universal opposition of the ideal and the real, the infinite and the finite; for it is necessary that concept and object be opposed to one another in being connected to each other, since more is always contained in the infinite, whose immediate expression is the concept, than in the finite, whose direct expression is the object.

Of every alleged philosophy that is not true philosophy, one can say in advance that no matter what form under which it appears, it remains fixed at this antithesis.

Geometry, however, and mathematics as a whole are entirely beyond this opposition. Here thought is always adequate to being, concept to object, and vice versa, and never can the question of whether what is correct and certain in thought is also real or in the object, or whether what is expressed in being attains to conceptual necessity, even arise. In a word, there is no difference here between subjective and objective truth, subjectivity and objectivity are absolutely one and there is in this science no construction in which they are not one.

That mathematical evidence rests solely on this unity has already been shown (§ I.); indeed, this unity is pure evidence itself, though it appears in geometry and in arithmetic in some determinate subordination, in the first subordinated to being, in the second to thought (this point will be comprehensible only to those who have generally come to understand how everything is contained in everything, and how what is expressed on the one side in being, and on the other in thought, reflects the entire organism of reason): now to perceive this evidence—or the unity of thought and being, not in this or that context but simply in and for itself, consequently, as the evidence in all evidence, the truth in all truth, the purely known in everything known—means to elevate oneself to the intuition of absolute unity and with that to intellectual intuition as such.

One who is outside this unity of thought and being or of the subjective and objective, is simply, entirely, and from the very start outside all objective certainty;²⁸⁵ with this unity, the principle of identity used in demonstration is abandoned all at once or remains at best a principle of the understanding; “proof” is progression inside [mere] logical identity, inside the conceptual unity of reflection, without truth or purchase. Reason, even in its more imperfect efforts, has always associated the highest and most immediate evidence with this unity of thought and being. Even for the dogmatist, this opposition between thought and being interwoven through all the concepts and forms of finite knowledge was merely subjectively unsurpassable, and even he recognized as the highest objectivity of knowledge a unity in which being immediately followed from and was joined to concept, and reality to ideality. Connected with this [recognition] was the so-called ontological proof of the existence of God, which the systems of reflection rightly regarded as the point of purest philosophical evidence. It [i.e., dogmatism] did not lack the idea of the absolute, only its mode of knowledge was topsy-turvy. Reflection relies in its very nature on the antithesis of thought and being. The unity of thought and being was for these systems only just another case of being (something objective); only in this [objective] unity were thought and being united, and God was absolute insofar as the antithesis was unified in him, insofar as relative to God, being or actuality followed directly from idea or possibility. But thought remained outside this unity and in subjective opposition to it; the antithesis was abolished in God, but not in the cognition of God. In this way, accordingly, the identity of thought and being in the absolute itself was downgraded to a mere case of being, related to the philosopher’s thinking as the real to the ideal, or as objective item to subjective item; the being of God no longer followed from the idea in God himself, but from the philosopher’s thinking [about God]; hence, the very idea of the absolute, to be the identity of thought and being, was as good as lost.²⁸⁶

This fact, that the reality of the absolute in no way follows from the mere *thought* of it (because the reality of a golden mountain does not follow from my ability to imagine it, or, to put it in a quite Kantian way, one’s cash balance is not increased by imagining one hundred dollars), and because Criticism has introduced a deep and profound uniformity of opinion on this matter, has grown into a universal prohibition against all positive, categorical cognition of the absolute, and has brought about a situation where, unless one decides to entirely renounce thinking of the absolute, one is forced at very least to begin philosophizing hypothetically, with pure thought or the understanding’s principle of identity, and then see if one might come upon being in addition.

The basis for reflection’s effort to take the absolute as absolute but nonetheless fix it as something objective lies in its ignorance of the absolute mode of cognition, but this ignorance is not more, or more evidently, responsible than is the mere apparently opposed tendency of Criticism, which can point out what is contradictory in reflection’s effort, but is unable on its own to point to

anything that surpasses this sphere of contradiction, and which is thus shown to be, compared to the true philosophy, merely an impoverished skepticism, itself entirely deformed by reflection, and which thinks it that at one blow it has vanquished philosophy itself and negated it as speculation. True skepticism is entirely directed against reflection's mode of cognition, but from the principle of true speculation, except that it cannot express this position categorically, since it would then cease to be skepticism; but one can be sure that skepticism will never find any weapons against speculation or absolute cognition except those derived from common-sense or relative knowledge, whose reality it must itself impugn since they are not only objects of its doubt but are unconditionally rejected by it. Related in this way, skepticism and philosophy can never be brought together, since the former stands to the latter as its absolute privation, almost the way darkness stands to light, for which darkness simply does not exist and is immediately²⁸⁷ abolished by it.

The absolute mode of cognition, like the truth that subsists within it, has no true opposite outside itself, and if it cannot be demonstrated [to one who lacks it] just as light cannot be demonstrated to those born blind, or space to someone who lacked spatial intuition (were it possible that an intelligent being lacked it), on the other hand, it cannot be contradicted by anything. It is the dawning light that is itself the day and knows no darkness.

Whoever sets foot in the territory of philosophy is compelled by every circumstance to incorporate the living sense of this absolute cognition, which of course can neither be given him nor forced upon him; yet from acknowledging this preliminary, merely formal kind of absolute cognition, it is but a small step to the insight that this cognition is immediately a cognition of the absolute itself, and is accompanied by the abolition of all differences that contrast the absolute as cognized to the subject who cognizes it.

With [just] a few strokes we complete the proof that for consciousness there is a point where the absolute itself and knowledge of the absolute are simply one.

That thought as such, since it has a necessary opposite in being, neither is nor can become absolute cognition is a matter sufficiently clear, and one placed totally beyond doubt by the preceding remarks. Thus on the whole an absolute cognition can only be conceived as one in which thought and being are not opposed, [a unity] in which they are completely equivalent forms, separated only in reflection or the understanding, but in themselves absolutely inseparable.

Furthermore, it is immediately clear to anyone who in some sense has the idea of the absolute (quite apart from whether he ascribes reality to it or not) that in this idea is conceived one identical absolute unity of ideality and reality, of thought and being.

Here at the start, we do not want to presume anything about the absolute's essence, about which we assert nothing here. We speak solely of the idea of the absolute, and set down the following for the sake of explanation:

What is united in all being²⁸⁸ are the universal and the particular; the former corresponds to thought, the latter to being. Now with respect to no finite or individual thing does the particular follow from the universal. The fact that some one individual human exists, or that right now, e.g., just so many humans exist, not more and not less, cannot be understood from the concept of a human being. Here being in no way follows from essence; no individual thing is determined to existence through its concept, but through something *that is not its concept*.

The essence of all things is one, and considered by itself there is in it no ground of the particular: that whereby they are separated and distinguished is form, which is the difference of the universal and the particular and is expressed in them through their existence.

In order not to repeat what is already familiar to everyone, that with respect to the absolute being immediately follows from essence, we propose to more closely define this [relation of the universal and particular]. Universal and particular are simply one in the case of what is absolute, its concept (to absolutely *be*) is at the same time its particularity; it is, of course, absolute in both respects, consequently, it is neither like any other thing (through some universal concept) nor unlike it (through its particularity); it is absolutely and essentially one, and simply self-identical. —Now *since* it is form by which the particular entity is a particular, [and] the finite item a finite, so *too form is one with essence*, each of course absolute, since in the absolute the particular and the universal are absolutely one—and here in this *absolute unity or identical absoluteness of essence and form lies the proof of our above-stated principle*, the disclosure of how it is possible that the absolute itself and knowledge of the absolute can be one, of the possibility, therefore, of an immediate cognition of the absolute.

Since, according to our assumption that there is in intellectual consciousness a formally absolute cognition, the absolute subsists in cognition in its formal aspect, so, because the absolute indifference of essence and form belongs to its idea, it also subsists in the essential aspect of cognition; the absolute unity of thought and being, of the ideal and the real, not differentiated from its essence, is the absolute's eternal form, the absolute itself; for, since the difference of the ideal and the real also posits the difference of essence and form, and since the latter are one in the absolute, it follows that the unity of the ideal and the real is necessarily the form of the absolute, and equally that in it, form is itself absolute and identical to *essence*.

Now there is in absolute cognition just such an absolute unity of thought and being (as was shown); the sole opposition that might remain is that cognition, *formally* defined and as such, might be opposed to the *absolute itself*, but form is the absolute itself, unity of essence and form pertains to its idea: *and, consequently, formally absolute cognition is necessarily a knowing of the absolute itself*. Therefore, there is an immediate cognition of the absolute (and

only of the absolute, since only in its case is this condition of immediate evidence possible: unity of essence and form) and this is the first speculative cognition, the principle and the ground of possibility of all philosophy.

We call this cognition *intellectual intuition: Intuition*; because all intuition is an identification of thought and being and because only in intuition as such is reality: In the case under consideration, the mere *thought* of the absolute, granted that this is determined in its idea as that which *is* immediately through its concept, is in no way yet a true cognition of the absolute. This is found only in an intuition that absolutely identifies thought and being, which because it formally expresses the absolute also becomes the expression of its essence. We call this intuition *intellectual* because it is reason-intuition, and because, *as* cognition, it is absolutely one with the object of knowing.²⁸⁹

Philosophy rests [a] on this point of coincidence between formal absolute cognition and the absolute itself, [b] on its cognizing the mode of this coincidence, and [c] on insight into the uniqueness of the point where cognition can be absolutely one with its object—(this is of course conceivable only in with respect to the absolute). All philosophical certainty²⁹⁰ follows from this point; it is itself the ultimate evidence.

The requirement on which every science bases its reality is that what is absolutely cognized by it: the idea, can also be the real itself; in geometrical construction this coincidence of idea and reality shows up directly, since it is granted to geometry to display the archetypes, as it were, in outer intuition; in philosophical construction this point of coincidence is simple, absolute, context-free intellectual intuition, in which absolute cognition along with the κατ' ἐξοχήν²⁹¹ real, the absolute itself, are recognized as the uniquely true and real things, and so too the modes of this cognition.

In this indifference of form and essence lies also the uniquely possible and necessary point of union for idealism and realism.

Idealism entirely reduces philosophy to form, to knowledge, to cognition. If this knowledge or cognition is itself absolute knowledge, absolute cognition, then what is needed to correct the view that it is antithetical to realism is merely reflection on the proposition that absolute form (absolute knowledge) is also absolute essence, being, substance. But cognition is not yet cognized as absolute if one views it in antithesis to being and does not also recognize it as absolute reality.

Realism alleges that it starts from an absolute being, but if this being is really absolute, it directly follows that it is a being located in the ideas, and as simply absolute, in the idea of all ideas, in absolute cognition.²⁹² This relationship is what we have called the relation of indifference (not some inane synthesis, as many have represented it).

The absolute mode of cognition, since it is the principle of *all* rational comprehension, is also the principle of its own comprehension. The living

principle of philosophy and of every faculty by which the finite and the infinite are identified is absolute cognition itself insofar as it is the idea and essence of the soul; it is the eternal concept by which soul subsists in the absolute, neither originated nor transitory, it is simply eternal, without temporal dimension; it identifies the finite and the infinite inside cognition, and is at once absolute cognition and the unique true being and substance.²⁹³

Moreover from this one can conclude that any intuition, in other respects arbitrarily defined, in which the opposition of the finite and the infinite is not absolutely destroyed is not intellectual intuition. Therefore an intuition can never be called intellectual intuition in which something of the empirical subject, or of the I in some sense other than that in which it is universal form (or pure subject-object) remains outside this form; the same goes for any sort of intuition that in the act of *intuiting itself reaches* only to the identity of the subjective subject-object (in this case intellectual intuition would be distinguished from all sorts of empirical intuition only in this respect: in the latter something different from the subject is intuited, while in the former what intuits and what is intuited are identical).

§IV.²⁹⁴

On Philosophical Construction or the Way to Exhibit All Things in the Absolute

Since we now proceed to the other part of our inquiry that considers science and the way it is generated from the unity of first cognition [or intellectual intuition], we do not doubt that there are some who will think its realization intrinsically impossible, while others will at the very least not clearly recognize its possibility.²⁹⁵

Since we have left behind everything on which finite understanding is accustomed to insist and have even cut off all return to the realm of the conditioned by our declaration that philosophy subsists entirely and completely in the absolute, it is hardly our intention to allow anything to remain behind which we might use to return to the conditioned, [we now face a double difficulty] : most people will comprehend neither, in general, how we can see so clearly into the absolute that we can ground a science in it (although its possibility surely resides in what we have proved before), nor, specifically, how we intend to draw material for a science from the simply identical and thoroughly simple essence of the absolute. For it will be argued that no science is possible of something that is simply one and ever the same, that something else is required which is not identical, but multiple and differentiated; and that even if *what* is demonstrated is forever and necessarily one and the same, by

contrast, that *in which* unity is demonstrated is necessarily not one, but many, as happens in geometry, where the identical form and absolute unity of space is expressed in the different units of triangles, squares, circles, etc.

Clearly with this [difficulty] we find ourselves situated again inside the first opposition of unity and multiplicity, and the pictorial image²⁹⁶ of a production of the latter from the former, and though we might imagine these thoughts canceled once and for all in the cognition of *such* a unity in whose scope the contrast of unity and multiplicity had utterly no meaning, where instead multiplicity subsisted within unity, without prejudice to the higher unity that includes them both, we must expect to see them forever recur, since the idea of an *absolute* unity—a unity that *directly*, without going through multiplicity, is *also totality*—can be assumed to be the possession only of those who have really mastered the supreme point of philosophy.

So to put this idea in the brightest possible light and still stay with this contrast between *what* is proved and that *in which* it is proved (the former of which is supposed to be ever and always one, the latter not-one and multiple), I say this: *what* is proved, which we assume is ever the same, is the absolute unity of the finite and the infinite; for the present purpose I call it the *universal*. That *in which* it is proved is a determinate unity, and is accordingly called the *particular*. Now demonstration is absolute identification of the universal and the particular, that [universal] which is proved and that [particular] in which it is so. These are necessarily and simply one in every construction, and only where this is the case can a construction of philosophy be deemed absolute. Now since the former, the universal, is by supposition absolutely and eternally one, but both members are equal in the construction, it follows that the particular is also absolutely one in every construction, so that neither of the two is one or many in contrast to the other, but each is for itself one and many in absolute unity, both therefore the identical unity of the finite and the infinite, and the unity *between* them a real and essential one.²⁹⁷

With this it is clear how in every construction, if it is true and genuine, the particular is abolished as particular in its antithesis to the universal. The particular is itself exhibited within the absolute only insofar as it contains the *entire absolute* exhibited within itself and is only ideally different from the absolute as universal, viz., as a copy is different from an original, while intrinsically or really it is entirely identical to it. But to that extent, the *particular* itself is also nothing that could ever be multiple or be counted, for it includes all aspects of number, both what enumerates (the unit-concept) and what is enumerated (the particular).

In this identity²⁹⁸ or equal absoluteness of the unities that we distinguish as particular and universal resides and is found the innermost mystery of creation, the divine identification²⁹⁹ (imaging) of original and copy that is the true root

of every being. For neither the particular nor the universal would have a reality for itself if the two were not formed into one³⁰⁰ within the absolute, i.e., unless both were absolute.

With this is also illustrated the mode or possibility of exhibiting all unities within the absolute; for the different unities have no substance³⁰¹ in themselves as different, but are merely ideal forms and figures under which the whole is minted, and because the whole subsists in them, they are the whole world itself and have nothing outside themselves to which they could be compared or contrasted. —The entire universe subsists in the absolute as plant, as animal, as human being, but since the whole is in every part, it subsists therein not as plant, not as animal, not as human being or as the particular unity, but as absolute unity; it is first within appearance, where it ceases to be the *whole*, where the form pretends to be something for itself and steps out of indifference with essence, that each becomes the particular and the determinate unity.

With the particular entity, then, not even considered in its species or natural kind,³⁰² there is nothing in the absolute. There is no plant in itself or animal in itself; what we call plant is (not essence, substance, but) mere concept, mere ideal determination, and all forms obtain reality only because they receive the divine image of unity; but, due to that, they themselves become universes and are designated ideas and each one ceases to be a particular entity in that it enjoys the double unity in which absoluteness consists.

Even the philosopher, therefore, knows not a distinct essence, but only one essence in all the original schematisms of world-intuition; he does not construct the plant or animal, but (the absolute form, i.e.,) the universe in the figure of a plant, the universe in the shape of an animal; these schematisms are possible only in virtue of their ability to take into themselves the undivided fullness of unity, so that they are negated as particular. For as particular, they would limit absolute essence, in that they exclude other forms from themselves. But insofar as every one of them grasps the absolute, and in each all recur and all in each, they show themselves to be the forms of divine in-forming [or imagination], and are truly or uniquely real since they are possible in the context of the absolute, because in it there is no difference between possibility and actuality.

Since in this way absolute cognition comprehends all forms within itself, every one of them in perfect absoluteness, so that within its scope (each is absolute for itself) everything is contained within each (since it is absolute), and for just this reason nothing [particular] is included in any one of them, it is clear to what extent that it can be said that it contains everything precisely because it contains nothing, and further, how in a manner similar to the absolute itself, every idea is also both *identity and totality*, not each separately, but each in the same way, in the same undivided essence.

It is also evident, on the other hand, how every particular *as such* is immediately and necessarily also an *individual*. For by its essence each thing

is like every other and in this capacity expresses the whole; so when its form becomes *particular* form, it becomes inadequate to essence and is in contradiction with it, and the contradiction of form and essence makes the thing be individual and finite (§ II.).

Consequently, all the things of appearances are copies of the (original) whole, even if highly imperfect, and strive in particular form, as particular to express in themselves the universe. Their being³⁰³ as particular things resides in the *particular schematism*, which is nothing in itself, and even if each thing accepts as much universality as possible into its particularity and as finite endeavors to be infinite, still due to its imperfection in reaching this goal, it is partially subjected to [external] law as its universal, and does not attain the full perfection which only the ideas truly can enjoy and, to a greater or lesser degree, those creatures most like the ideas, in that they include a wider range of other beings within themselves, namely, the perfection of being law themselves and of comprehending the universal in their particularity and the particular in their universality. Everything lives and moves because of this twofold striving, and this striving springs from the first forming-into-one³⁰⁴ [identification] or from the fact that the undivided essence of the absolute is stamped identically upon the real and the ideal, and that substance subsists only in this way.

The preceding remarks clearly illuminate this feature of cognition, that philosophy subsists in the absolute and that its entire business and enterprise rests in this; from this we can see the error of those pictures of philosophy that locate its task a) in a *derivation*, whether from the absolute or from another principle in its place, or b) in some deduction of the *actual*,³⁰⁵ appearing world, *as such*, or of the possibility of experience.

For, in the first place, how could philosophy know something derived or that could be derived, since only the absolute *is* [without qualification] and everything that we can cognize is a fragment of the absolute essence of the eternal principle, only cast in the form of appearance, while philosophy considers only what everything is in itself, i.e., in the eternal?

But [secondly,] how could it be a derivation of the *real* world as such, since in this world there are no ideas, not, e.g., the idea of triangle or the idea of human being, but always individual triangles, individual humans? Though if one wished to say that philosophy still has to exhibit the real world in its immediate possibility, viz., in the necessary and universal laws that determine appearances like the law of cause and effect, I answer, first, that all these laws, far from expressing some true possibility of the things of appearances, are instead truly expressions of their absolute nothingness and insubstantiality, e.g., the law that substance endures while accidents change expresses [the notion] that in things there is no unity of form and essence, therefore no true being, no self-derived being, which is further expressed in the law that each thing is

determined to existence and action through another, which in turn is determined by yet another, and so forth without end.

In all these laws [of appearances], a merely relative unity is expressed, and consequently a being *outside of* absolute unity, which is in itself a nothing. Not-being-in-absolute-identity immediately entails being determined *by another being*, and, consequently, in its own respect, not-being-in-itself. In the same way, what is determined in the thing by the law of cause and effect, and generally by the law of relative opposition, is forever and necessarily the negation of reality in it, or that [aspect] whereby it really is not. —One nonentity seeks its reality in another, which again has none and seeks it in another. The endless dependence of things on one another through cause and effect is itself the expression and, as it were, the consciousness of the futility to which they are subjected,³⁰⁶ and a counterstriving toward the unity in which alone everything is real.

But, in the second place, I reply that these laws insofar as they are determinations of reflected cognition pertain to appearance, no less than do the things determined by them, and that, though philosophy surely has to exhibit these laws, [it does so] only in the in-itself *whose* appearance they are, namely in the absolute unity of form and essence, or of possibility and actuality.

But what has caused the mistaken view that philosophy's construction is deduction, and therefore a thoroughly conditioned activity, to arise even among people who otherwise have some insight into the nature of construction, is that they had taken ideal determinations which were produced only to be submerged again into absolute unity by construction for the essence and substance of the matter. In order to exhibit unity as real unity, one must necessarily be acquainted with the totality and entire possibility of forms, but not as if these had substance in themselves, even less as if they were for themselves just ideal sketches that first obtain substantiality by an in-forming of the whole, for on this view they would cease to be specific determinations. In general, [the fact] that the relation of a body of science and its first principle is pictured as a deduction of the former from the latter could have only the following meaning, either one assumes that the deduced totality subsists in the principle that serves as its unity: what is important in this case is not so much to deduce the totality from the principle as to exhibit the totality in the principle which is its unity; or it is assumed that the principle from which totality is deduced is not absolute unity, but some sort of unity torn out of totality, like any other particular, conditioned part.³⁰⁷ This latter unity can certainly claim priority in the subjective context of *knowing*, where it is the ultimate point of separation or transition of the forms from unity, but when what is mere condition is made the essential matter itself, when the means gains predominance over the end to such an extent that it becomes the end, only a thoroughly conditioned finite philosophy can arise which no longer penetrates to absolute unity and the

restoration of the universe in its divine harmony and to immediate cognition of the absolute, but ends in doubling³⁰⁸ and conflict.

I think it useless at this point to discuss the distinction between analytic and synthetic method that has been clumsily imported into philosophy from mathematics. For how the former of these two methods is possible is a topic we wish to leave the reader to understand from what we have said about the difference in the mode of cognition between arithmetic and geometry (§ I.), the first of which expresses the unity of the finite and the infinite in the infinite, or the unity of pure identity, the second the same unity in the finite, or the unity of difference. Philosophy, however, can have but one method, since it expresses its constructions neither in the one [the infinite] nor in the other [the finite] but only in the eternal, in unity considered in and for itself.

What has recently been called synthetic method is indeed a true image of this absolute method, but one pulled apart in reflection. This is because what reflection represents as a process with thesis, antithesis, and synthesis lying outside one another, is unitary and internally related in the true method and in every genuine construction of philosophy. The thesis or categorical element is unity, the antithesis or the hypothetical is multiplicity, but what is pictured as the synthesis is not the third element, but the first, absolute unity, of which unity and plurality in their very opposition are merely different forms. In just this way philosophy's every construction is a universe for itself and comprehends in itself—because its particular element can be separated as form from essence and can intrinsically be doubled—both unity and multiplicity, without itself being one or many in this sense.

But what has been usually contrasted by others as analytic and synthetic method is the same insignificant thing; for whether the conditions of a given something are sought forwards or backwards, further, whether this conditioned thought is expressed objectively or subjectively, as in, e.g., "I have assumed A, but do not know how to begin with it without B, therefore B must be assumed too"—(which is, by the way, the greatest absurdity that can be)—all this is in itself entirely arbitrary and [pertains to] the same empirical and analytic manner of philosophizing.

This conditioned sort of philosophizing we have described above has made itself so influential that some of this school are brought to the point of utterly despising form, behaving with respect to philosophy more like cloud-specialists toward a fog or like naturalists toward some chance eruption. These people are in as deep a state of ignorance about the nature of construction as the others [who regard the business of philosophy as the derivation of phenomena from a relative principle or a postulate], but what construction might be, and the absolute character of science as well, can be displayed for everyone in geometry.—Can you pick out one cognition in geometry that is not intrinsically absolute

and the whole of geometry? Doesn't every truth stand out as a particular world, or can you draw a line from one to the other and display continuity mechanically? —Choose from the universe whatever fragment you will and realize that it is infinitely fruitful and is impregnated with the possibilities of all things! —Can you place [all] the forms of nature on a [single] line, or doesn't every one of them remind your reflective and conditioned understanding³⁰⁹ of their absoluteness? —Can you command a metal to appear at the point where it lies in the taxonomy your understanding produces, or the plant to bloom where you rank it in a classification, or any being at all to distinguish itself the way you mentally separate it, or doesn't everything instead lie before you in divine confusion and complexity? Doesn't everything that in your attitude of separation flies light-years apart press toward unity and live peacefully together, everything joyful in its own way? This unity causes each of them to form an image of the totality and with this to mirror the other within itself. Thus it happens in the same way and for the same reason that everything is one and yet each item is separated.

Yet on this topic I believe that, just as universally every noble element is enhanced by its form, so in this particular case a cognition so sublime cannot be left to chance insight, but since at all time it arises in some exceptional individuals in more or less universal form, we need to think of putting it riches in their absolute form and make a transition from the patchwork of particular knowledge to the totality of cognition.³¹⁰ I declare that this is the final goal and purpose of all my scientific efforts, which, had not most people followed with closed minds, would have been easy to see in all my writings, and I believed nothing was too dear for attaining this end which necessitated this concern with [philosophy's] form, not even lingering at stages that did not correspond to the degree of my own cognition. For, I wanted to know the truth in all its particular directions in order to freely and without distortion plumb the depths of the absolute. This cannot be a matter of a facile and hurried harvest of thoughts which lie before us in a plentiful mass, but of fashioning a worthy and enduring configuration which brings all the particular tones and colors of truth into concordance and harmony, and which expresses the archetype that each sees in part. You will readily discover the most excellent of all pieces of knowledge³¹¹ in the fragments of the most ancient wisdom; you will find the doctrine of ideas already in Pythagoras and even more so as a tradition in Plato. Even Heraclitus was not the first to recognize unity in opposition (identity in duplicity) as the universal form of the universe. You will readily perceive the doubled unity of all things, how each is primordially absolute in its particularity and in its absoluteness particular, in Leibniz's doctrine of monads, whose origin you can again follow into indeterminable distances, and finally you will certainly encounter the teaching that comprehends all this, going back to Spinoza and Parmenides, as far as the history of philosophy and human knowledge reaches,

of the unity that is indivisibility present in each thing and the substance of them all. These wellsprings flow for everyone, but still have grown into knowledge in [only] a few, since the latter is born only from an inner living form and from the impulse of one's own skill. In general, the greater the knowledge you achieve, the more you will perceive how all the different teachings that have been formally elaborated³¹² are nothing other than images displaced in different directions of the sole true system, which, like eternal nature, is neither young nor old and is first according to nature, not in time. So too the effort that is seriously focused on the sole true object can be none other than to extricate the entirety of cognition that courses through all human thought and [is deployed] in all directions in more or less visible veins, put this into a visible shape which displays its primordial beauty and bring this to eternal recognition.

What can most effectively strengthen everyone in this endeavor is to consider how it was possible that a cognition of the purest evidence, which indeed is evidence itself, and from which all fundamentally powerful thoughts flow and to which they return, has to date not yet achieved enduring form. There is no other cause of this situation than the fact that in philosophy, where a foundation for cognition has been established, but before science has broken through to universality, a rebuttal exists [which asserts] that only the last totality comprehends and carries everything and resolves all contradictions, and that only in it can everything find its enduring place.

In this situation what is at first and preeminently operative is the ambiguity of all determinations and concepts of reflection, which show themselves to be empty understanding in just their separation, [the fact] that for instance one item can appear as real or finite on one side, but can be shown to be ideal or infinite on another, and vice versa, just as every point of the magnetic line is positive, negative, or indifferent depending on how it is considered, [and] then, in this fluctuating, living totality one factor plays with the other, like color in color, time in nature, space in history, and everything that understanding [usually] fixes is without stability and nothing is clearly cognized in its conjoint particularity and universality, until, thanks to a construction carried to the point of totality which actually comprehends everything in everything, this almost divine chaos is exhibited in its simultaneous unity and disorder.

In addition, whatever limits that might be placed on human [cognitive] capacities and whatever limits might reside in the nature of its object, which, as I am well aware, make it impossible to draw up a "crystal clear" report on the universe,³¹³ I retain this certainty at least, that once this system is presented and recognized in its entirety, the absolute harmony of the universe and the divinity of all being will be eternally established within human thought, and furthermore that no doctrine can arise from a universal uncertainty which rebuts or misapprehends [this system], so that henceforth no limitations can be supplied or lent currency which poverty of spirit and utmost God-forsakenness

usually select to ascend to speculation,³¹⁴ whereby [philosophy] once again places itself in opposition to complete abstractness³¹⁵ and superficiality³¹⁶ in ordinary people: a state of affairs which can always result from putting one of the possible points of reflection and relative identities into prominence, recasting the majority of them in its form and thereby distorting them, but which is stopped forever by placing these [isolated] points of reflection in the context of an all-embracing system and exhibiting them in their thoroughly relative truth, whereby in addition is achieved that each position grounded on one of these [points of reflection] falls within the territory of the true system and the possibility of particular philosophies, which could only arise in the way we have shown, is annihilated, whereupon the dominion of the sole triumphant Philosophy automatically commences.

In light of this situation, but equally because, now that everybody talks about philosophy as absolute science and construction has been imported into it, I believed I saw so many people busying themselves with endless talk of philosophy while so few had the right idea of it, I resolved to set out this discussion as a preface to this second part and to make it the gateway, as it were, to the heart of the teaching, and since in the preceding pages I think I have shown the unity and totality of philosophy, both in its principle and in each of its constructions, I shall now discuss, still on the general scale, absolute form as that which discloses essence and which universally mediates between knowing and the absolute.

For most people see in the essence of the absolute nothing but empty night and can cognize nothing in it; in their eyes, it entirely dwindles into the mere negation of difference and is for itself entirely a privative entity; therefore they prudently make it into the conclusion³¹⁷ of their philosophy. And though, as a defense against those who lack this primary cognition [or intellectual intuition] and do not know the gateway into true science, and so falsify it with finite concepts and limiting conditions, I have in the first part of this essay sufficiently considered the unitary relation between the absolute and cognition (§ II.), I wish to show here in a more detailed way how for cognition the night of the absolute is changed into day.

Only in the form of all forms is the *positive* essence of unity cognized, but this (absolute form) is embodied in us as the living idea of the absolute, so that our cognition subsists in it and it subsists in our cognition, and we can see in it as clearly as we see into ourselves and view everything in a single light, in comparison to which every other sort of cognition, but especially sensible cognition, is profound darkness.

There is not an absolute knowledge and outside of this an absolute as well, but the two are one, and herein lies the essence of philosophy, because outside the absolute there is also an absolute knowledge [located] in another sort of cognition, except that [in philosophy] this cognition is not simultaneously

the substance and reality of the absolute itself, as in absolute knowledge. Philosophy's first cognition depends on identifying the two, on the insight that there is no other absolute except in form (in absolute evidence itself) and no other access to the absolute than this form, that what follows from this form also follows also the absolute itself, and [that] what subsists in the former also subsists in the latter.

Identification of form with essence in absolute intellectual intuition³¹⁸ snatches the ultimate doubling [of the real and ideal] away from the dualism it inhabits and establishes *absolute idealism* in place of the idealism that is confined to the world of appearances.

The essence of the absolute in and for itself reveals nothing to us, it fills us with images of an infinite enclosure, of an impenetrable stillness and concealment, the way the oldest forms of philosophy pictured the state of the universe before he who is life stepped forth *in his own shape* in the act of his self-intuitive cognition. This eternal form, identical to the absolute itself, is the day in which we comprehend that night and the wonders hidden in it, the light in which we clearly discern the absolute, the eternal mediator, the all-seeing and all-disclosing eye of the world, the source of all wisdom and cognition.³¹⁹

For it is within this form and through it that the *ideas* are cognized, the unique possibility of comprehending absolute profusion within absolute unity, the particular in the universal, and precisely by that also the absolute in the particular—blessed beings, which some call the first creatures who live in the immediate sight of God, of which we can more accurately say that they themselves are gods, since each is for itself absolute, and yet each is included in the absolute form.

For in the absolute form subsists all that exists in the unity of the universal and the particular, and only the unity, *as unity*, is identical to form and essence; but universal and particular subsist as opposites for just this reason: they are mere factors of form, and to the extent they are real, each is again for itself the unity of the universal and particular; they are also merely ideally differentiable and opposed to one another not in an essential (qualitative) way, but only in an inessential way. The *idea*, therefore, is always and necessarily absolute, since in it the universal and the particular are necessarily identified, and also since nothing can make it cease to be absolute by, e.g., being related to an object, for as absolute form it includes absolute substance in itself and is itself the absolute object.³²⁰

So too it cannot be claimed that in the ideas we grasp only the possibility of things but do not cognize any real thing, for the absolute form is opposed to the particular form in precisely this, that the latter is separated from essence, therefore from reality as well, and is not in itself, while the former includes absolute reality within itself, just as the absolute comprehends in itself the categorical form that posits thought and being as identical. —The triangle that

the geometer constructs is certainly not an actual, i.e., individual triangle, but it is the absolute, simply real one, in contrast to the actual or appearing triangle to whose share falls no substantiality.

By this is seen the profound absurdity and deep-rooted unreason of those people who require that there be something particular outside the idea of absolute unity in order to arrive at actuality, who want to fix individuality, which as such is the absolute negation of universality or complete suspension of idea, in a universal that they designate stuff or matter. For matter, insofar as it is absolute, i.e., real, and is essence, subsists within absolute form itself and is identical to it, for this latter requires for reality nothing outside itself.

Moreover, since absolute form is absolute essence too, and therefore there is *nothing* outside it, if anything is posited as real under the form of nonidentity that contradicts it, it is immediately abolished in thought, just as, on the other hand, if this form is posited as absolute, everything resistant to and incompatible with it is directly established as insubstantial.

But by this relation of absolute form to essence, it is easy to comprehend what procedure can be the sole true method of philosophy, i.e., the one under which everything is absolute and no one thing is the absolute.

For if you want to understand the particular through philosophy, i.e., to comprehend it in the absolute as its principle, you no doubt wish you could understand in the same act of comprehension two distinct things, how everything is one in principle and how within this unity every form is absolutely distinct from the others; you cannot attain either of these goals without including the other with it, since you cannot absolutely isolate one form from the others without making it into absolute unity or into the universe in and for itself, for only the universe is truly and absolutely definite, since there is nothing outside it that it could be like or unlike; conversely, you cannot grasp the particular form as a universe for itself or conceive it *absolutely* without in the very process submerging it as particular *in the absolute*.

From this, one can immediately perceive that the true method of philosophy can only be the demonstrative one, but since it is unusual to encounter even a general idea of demonstrative method, I shall explain this more particularly. Demonstration³²¹ does not precede construction, but the two are one and inseparable. In construction the particular (the determined unity) is exhibited as absolute, namely, as absolute *unity of the ideal and the real* for itself. For, since as unity it is the unity that cannot be canceled in anything or in any manner, so there can be no construction in which in general any particular, hence a purely finite or infinite entity, could be expressed as such without the identical unity and undivided perfection of the absolute being expressed, and it is only because this is the case that philosophy does not step outside the absolute. For since in form the finite stands related to the infinite as the real to the ideal, but form as such is always and necessarily their unity, therefore *each of them*, the

finite and the infinite, insofar as it is really, i.e., absolutely posited, *is the entire unity of the finite and the infinite*, neither of them finite nor infinite viewed apart from its ideal determination, but each absolute and eternal. —From this, it is self-evident that this unity of the finite and the infinite, which is in the absolute and is the essence of the absolute, is a *real* unity and also an identity of identity, as we have previously shown (*Zeitschr.[ift für spekulative Physik]*, vol. 2, issue 2).³²² For both the finite considered in itself and the infinite contain, *each of them, the same* (formal) *identity of the finite and the infinite*. Therefore we had to understand the former, real unity before we understood the latter, formal one (§III., 5).

If all this is granted, *construction* is, first and in general, exhibition of the particular inside absolute form, and *philosophical construction in particular*, the exhibition of the particular within form considered without qualification—not as itself ideal or real, as in the two branches of mathematics—but form as intuited in itself or intellectually. To understand on this basis how absolute form is not abolished in any construction—the particular, by the way, is either finite or infinite (for ideal determination)—we must especially consider that because of the complete relativity of this contrast, since neither a finite entity nor an infinite one subsists in itself, but only in relation, every particular being insofar as it accepts the entire absolute into itself is negated as a particular (finite or infinite) entity and merely reunites the finite and the infinite in itself.

The other [thing that needs explanation] is demonstration itself, which is the identification of form and essence within a structure such that, from what is constructed in absolute form (or whose absolute ideality is certain³²³) its absolute reality is also immediately proved.

For since absolute form immediately includes absolute substantiality, its indifference as form (or cognition) with essence (or object) follows with respect to every construction, i.e., absolute evidence.

This will suffice to recognize the nature of demonstration, which is entirely grounded in the fact that every particular *subsists in the absolute* precisely because it *is absolute*, and vice versa; we cannot conceive the former without the latter nor the latter without the former. Accordingly, all science depends on cognizing and identifying a twofold unity, one by means of which a being subsists in itself, and another by means of which it subsists in the absolute. Construction is thus, from start to finish, an absolute kind of cognition and (for exactly this reason) it has nothing to do with the actual world as such but is in its very nature idealism (if idealism means the doctrine of the *ideas*).³²⁴ For it is precisely this world that is commonly called actual that is abolished by construction. You call the appearing world “actual”³²⁵ only because for you form has become something for-itself. You call the particular form, e.g., the plant or animal, etc., actual. But precisely this is abolished within construction, for (according to what was proved earlier) the construction contains no more than the possibility of, e.g.,

the plant, *as form of the universe*. This is precisely what the actual plant is not, and, were it this and did it not separate itself from its essence, it would not be actual (*as a plant*), and hence the converse too, none of the things called actual can *be* in the absolute,³²⁶ for in the absolute, no form is divorced from its essence, everything is internally related as one being, one stuff, and from this single root all ideas are produced as divine shoots, since each is fashioned from the entire essence of the absolute. For that reason, the essence (the *in-itself*) of a thing cannot be this *thing itself*; so if you seek the actuality of a being of appearance in the absolute world, you will not find it there, and what there stands in absolute reality, you will not find here. The actuality of the appearing world *as such* cannot be acknowledged, therefore, not even insofar as its essence subsists in the absolute, but only its absolute unreality.

Our assertion, however, that philosophy's every construction and cognition is equally absolute might seem to contradict [our previous claim] that under the form of demonstrative method one cognition serves as a means to another, and each demonstration in the complex of the whole is possible only through others.

We resolve this seeming contradiction the same way we solved the earlier one.

That which makes every construction absolute is identical or one and the same with what serves as the principle of connection for philosophical demonstration.

This is so because the identical absoluteness of all constructions in philosophy rests on the fact that the features of finitude or infinitude are nothing, while their unity is everything and the same in everything, but just this same pervasive real unity is the reason that what is in-itself or absolute according to form can be finite or infinite inside the relative opposition and have, as finite or infinite, its ideal opposite in the other, while at the same time, since the identical is expressed according to essence in both opposites, the two combine into a real unity, so that everything returns to and takes root again in the same absolute identity and the identical abyss of divine unity.

Therefore within every construction only the ideal element provides opposition and with it connection to the other, but this purely ideal determinacy is in turn negated in the construction, since in every one of them the same absolute unity is exhibited in and for itself.

Since this ideal dependence of one cognition upon another along with the identical absoluteness of each for itself belongs to the form of philosophy as science, it is clearly important that each person make sure, all in the same way, that no necessary intermediate member is skipped over. My *System of [Transcendental] Idealism* was especially precise in this regard, though its purpose was to present but one side of philosophy, namely the subjective and ideal, in it was sketched out the general framework of construction whose schematism must also be the foundation of the completed system.³²⁷ For since the I in the

terminology of this idealism (which is only one side of philosophy) is none other than the ultimate and, as it were, culminating point of separation from the absolute—the point of being-for-itself, of acting-from-and-upon-oneself, of form—it is necessary that all ideal determinations be conjoined in this one point and be produced along with it, so that in the totality they return to *absolute identity*.

In order that we might be deemed worthy of this pervasive real unity that we have asserted it is essential that we understand it in its strongest and genuine sense. As anyone who has followed us to this point with some attention could note on his own, our view is not just that opposites are generally brought to unity in some universal concept, for such a unity would again be of a merely formal sort, but that *substance*³²⁸ is one in all things that are ideally opposed, and that everything is identical, not by the external bond of the concept, but in inner substance and content, as it were. What you cognize, e.g., in nature as an enclosed totality in space, and in history, on the other hand, as a totality pulled apart into endless time, are things not just figuratively one or one in concept, but truly *the same thing*, however different they may seem in that the one is placed under the seal of finitude, the other under the determination and law of infinitude, and just as eternal form, absolute cognition (which philosophy in its very name terms the object of its aspiration) is the absolute's innate reflection of its essence, in which it prefigures its full perfection in the wonders of eternity, just so inside the profusion of the whole each thing that might appear different from the other is again an image and emblem of another, and the first identity of essence and of form propagates itself in the doubling that shapes the oppositions within form, which again propagates itself in the infinitude of all beings, so that there is nothing that is not again related to another being, either as copy or as model.

Yet all of this, also how this essential identity, the one-in-all and all-in-one, enters science and through form comes to living cognition, will become evident in the full working out of science, and, at first, in the sketching out of the full picture of philosophy as the science that comprehends everything.

Notes

Notes to Introduction

1. Tr. H. S. Harris & Walter Cerf (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977) p. 82.
2. Tr. Paul Guyer & Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 700–01.
3. See *Critique of Pure Reason*, Preface, Bxvi–xvii.
4. Ibid., § 13: Principles of a Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding, A86/B116 f.
5. Ibid., Phenomena and Noumena, A235/B294–A240/B299.
6. Ibid., The Architectonic of Pure Reason, A841/B869 f.
7. See Kant’s famous three questions, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, On the Ideal of the Highest Good, A804/B832 ff.
8. A few competing accounts of the history of nineteenth-century German philosophy should be mentioned. Schelling and Hegel both lectured on the history of contemporary philosophy and attempted to outflank each other. Within fifteen years of Hegel’s death, Johann Eduard Erdmann produced three volumes on the development of German speculation after Kant; see *Versuch einer wissenschaftlichen Darstellung der Geschichte der neuern Philosophie* (1834–1853), vols. 5–7 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1977). Richard Kroner’s *Von Kant bis Hegel*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1961) set the standard for erudite, although argumentative historiography. Walter Schulz reversed the “all roads lead to Hegel” narrative with *Die Vollendung des deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1955). H. S. Harris and George di Giovanni enlarged the field of discussion to hitherto neglected figures such as Friedrich Jacobi, G. E. Schulze, and K. L. Reinhold in *Between Kant and Hegel: Texts in the Development of Post-Kantian Idealism*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2000). Three recent works have enlarged the discussion to include the early German Romantics, intimates of both Fichte and Schelling in their Jena years: Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe & Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: the Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, tr. Philip Barnard & Cheryl Lester (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, tr. by Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (Albany: State University of

New York Press, 2004), and Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

9. Quoted in Daniel Breazeale's introduction to *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1988) p. 14.

10. Heidegger's attempt to retrieve Schelling's philosophy in his 1936 lectures on *Of Human Freedom* bravely lays bare the impossibility of genuinely rejoining the German idealists in their quest for "system." Whatever the fit or "jointure" of being and human being may be, it is not within the grasp of one person or of organized learning in general, whether segregated in academic institutions or globally floating on a virtual cloud supported by machines nicely called "servers." See *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, tr. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, OH & London, Ohio University Press, 1985) pp. 22–68. Hereafter cited as *Schelling's Treatise*.

11. *Athenaeum-Fragmente*, #82, cited in *Schelling's Treatise*, p. 82.

12. Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg), *Fichte Studies*, ed. Jane Kneller (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) #566.

13. See Gérard Vallée's introduction to *The Spinoza Conversations Between Lessing and Jacobi: Text with Excerpts from the Ensuing Controversy*, tr. G. Vallée, J. B. Lawson, and C. G. Chappelle (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988) pp. 3–36.

14. See Kant's *Opus Postumum*, *Erste Hälfte*, ed. Artur Buchenau (Berlin & Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1936) 12.5–9 and 1.87, respectively.

15. See Fichte's *Second Introduction [to the Wissenschaftslehre]*, GA I, 4: 194–95.

16. See Letter 20 (Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, October 3, 1801) translated in this volume. Schelling apparently did not adequately understand, even in 1801, how the practical philosophy of that work grounded the theoretical, not the reverse.

17. Maimonides argues that human wrongdoing will not cease until the following condition is met: "every individual among the people not being permitted to act according to his will and up to the limit of his power, but being forced to do that which is useful to the whole." *Guide of the Perplexed*, Vol. II, tr. Schlomo Pines (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 510.

18. J. G. Fichte, *Grundlage des Naturrechts*, GA I, 3, 358; *Foundations of Natural Right*, ed. F. Neuhouser, tr. Michael Baur (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 49.

19. Novalis, op. cit., #648.

20. Ibid., #556.

21. See Paola Mayer, *Jena Romanticism and Its Appropriation of Jakob Böhme* (Montreal & London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999) pp. 63–67, on Schelling's initially anti-religious reaction to Böhme and the transformation of his identity-philosophy 1801–1802 by his use of Platonic and Neoplatonic sources, see pp. 182–92.

22. *Athenaeum-Fragmente* #206.

23. See Daniel Breazeale, "Men at Work: Philosophical Construction in Fichte and Schelling," forthcoming.

24. Allen Speight, "Friedrich Schlegel" (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/schlegel/>), 2007.

25. See Frederick Beiser, "Friedrich Schlegel's Absolute Idealism," in *German Idealism*, pp. 435–61.

26. In J. G. Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings*, tr. Daniel Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), pp. 150–51; GA I, 3, 354.

27. Daniel Breazeale provides a lively and detailed account of Fichte's early career at Leipzig, Warsaw, Königsberg, Zurich, and finally Jena, from 1794 to 1799 in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988) pp. 1–49.

28. J. G. Fichte, *The Vocation of Man*, tr. Roderick Chisholm (Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956) pp. 98–99.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 134–35.

30. See Letter 14 translated in this volume, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, November 19, 1800.

31. See Letter 23, Fichte to Schelling, January 15, 1802.

32. See *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, translated in this volume.

33. See J. G. Fichte, *Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy: (Wissenschaftslehre) nova methodo (1796/99)*, edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

34. See Michael Vater, "The *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1801–1802," in *Fichte: Historical Contexts/Contemporary Controversies*, ed. Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1994) pp. 191–210.

35. Fichte, *Wissenschaftslehre 1801/1802* (GA II/6: 317; cf. SW II: 153).

36. See Letter 20, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, October 3, 1801.

37. See Kant, Ideal of Pure Reason, *Critique of Pure*, A568/B596–A583/B611.

38. C. A. Eschenmayer, *Die Philosophie in ihrem Übergang zur Nichtphilosophie* (Erlangen, 1803).

39. Schelling, *Werke*, VI, 23–26.

40. *Ibid.*, 137–47. See F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Philosophy in General*, tr. Thomas Pfau, in *Idealism and the Endgame of Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) pp. 141–47.

41. A plethora of journals and plans for even more journals are discussed in the letters: the venerable *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung*, somewhat hostile to the hopes of the transcendental idealists, Fichte's *Philosophisches Journal*, Schelling's *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, the *Athenaeum* of the Jena romantics, Reinhold's *Beyträge zur leichtern Uebersicht des Zustandes der Philosophie beym Anfange des 19. Jahrhunderts*, a much-discussed common front journal that never materialized, and Schelling and Hegel's *Kritisches Journal*. For a detailed discussion of them, see *J. G. Fichte et F.W.J. Schelling: Correspondance (1794–1802)* edited and translated into French by Myriam Bienenstock (Paris: P.U.F., 1991) pp. 15–22.

42. See Letter 24, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, January 25, 1802—the final letter of the exchange.

43. See Letter 19, Fichte in Berlin to Schelling, May 31 to August 7, 1801.

44. See Letter 20, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, October 3, 1801.

45. J. G. Fichte, *First Introduction*, §§ 4–5, in: *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings*, op. cit., GA I, 3, 195.

46. See "While Reading Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism*," translated in this volume.

47. See Letter 13. Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, November 15, 1800.

48. See Letter 14. Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, November 19, 1800.
49. See Letter 15a, translated in this volume.
50. This draft was first published by F. Medicus, *Fichtes Leben und literarische Briefwechsel* (1922), and included in *Fichte-Schelling Briefwechsel*, ed. Walter Schulz (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1968) p. 114. Hereafter cited as Schulz.
51. See Letter 15, Fichte to Schelling in Jena, December 27, 1800.
52. See Letter 15a (cf. Schulz, p. 115).
53. See 1800 *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, translated in this volume.
54. See Letter 14, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, November 19, 1800.
55. See *Presentation of My System*, translated in this volume.
56. Fichte, GA II/6: 220f. (cf. SW II: 82).
57. Ibid., pp. 305–06 (cf. SW II: 143–44).
58. Ibid., pp. 290–91 (cf. SW II: 130–31).
59. See Fichte's *Announcement*, translated in this volume.
60. J. G. Fichte, *An Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre* (1797/1798), in *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre*, op. cit., p. 118. GA I, 3, 280.
61. See Schelling's essay on intellectual intuition in *Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy*, translated in this volume.
62. See Fichte, "On the Presentation of Schelling's System of Identity," translated in this volume.
63. See Fichte, "Preparatory Work Contra Schelling," translated in this volume.
64. See Second Introduction, §§ 3 & 5, and Chapter One, II of *Attempt at a New Presentation*, in *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre*, as cited, pp. 40–41 46–49, & 110–15; GA I, 3: 212–13, 216–19, 274–78.
65. See Letter 23, Fichte to Schelling, January 15, 1802. Compare the equally difficult Letter 19, Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, May 31 to August 7, 1801, where intellectual intuition is said to access not just the transcendental ground of the finite I but the divine self-consciousness that is both the ground of the separation of finite I's and their essential unity.
66. Schellings Werke, IV: 391–92n.
67. See Schelling's two essays on methodology, the first on intellectual intuition, the second on philosophical construction, translated in this volume.

Notes to Fichte–Schelling Correspondence

1. Schelling went to Bamberg at the beginning of May 1800 partly due to his medical interests and partly to accompany Caroline Schlegel (cf. GA III/4: 242).
2. "Ueber die Jenaische Allgemeine Literaturzeitung. Erläuterungen" (On the Jena *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*. Commentaries), originally published in Jena and Leipzig in 1800 (reprinted in Schelling, SW I/3: 635–65).
3. Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1757–1823) was Fichte's predecessor at the University of Jena where he first expounded Kantian philosophy on a systematic, in fact, foundationalist basis. He briefly became an exponent of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*,

but around the turn of the century joined forces with C. G. Bardili to propound a logical realism.

4. Christoph Gottfried Bardili (1761–1808) was a cousin of Schelling and taught Kantian philosophy at the Stuttgart *Gymnasium*. His *Grundriss der ersten Logik* (*Outlines of First Logic*) was published in Stuttgart in 1800. Reinhold's review of Bardili's *Logik* appeared in nos. 127 to 129 of the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* on May 5–7, 1800.

5. Schelling is referring to the following works: *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (Tübingen, 1800); English translation: *System of Transcendental Idealism* trans. Peter Heath, introduction by Michael Vater (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); *Einleitung zu der Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (Jena, 1799; Introduction to the Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature); *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, vol. 1, issue 2, 1800.

6. Fichte finally wrote some detailed comments on these works of Schelling, but they were never published during his lifetime. See Fichte's texts "Commentaries on Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism* and *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* (1800–1801)," translated in this volume.

7. Cf. Schelling's letter of May 14, 1800 (Letter 1), which Schelling had sent accompanied by a number of books.

8. "Ueber die Jenaische Allgemeine Literaturzeitung. Erläuterungen" (SW I/3: 635–65).

9. In his dispute with C. G. Schütz, the editor of the A.L.Z., in the end both parties had to pay damages: Schelling 10 thalers and Schütz 5 thalers (cf. GA III/4: 260).

10. Fichte's review eventually appeared in nos. 214, 215 of the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* on October 30–31, 1800: "Recension von Bardili's *Grundriss der ersten Logik*" (GA I/6: 433–50).

11. See Reinhold's letter to Fichte dated March 1, 1800 where he encourages Fichte to read Bardili's *Logik* (GA III/4: 235–38).

12. Most likely a reference to the Berlin banker, Salomon Moses Levi (cf. GA III/4: 260).

13. See the plan for a journal entitled: *Jahrbücher der Kunst und Wissenschaft* (Yearbooks of Art and Science), written by Fichte and Karl Ludwig Woltmann (1770–1817), and a "Critical Institute" (reprinted in GA I/6: 425–26). For a detailed account of Fichte's plan and the idea for an institute, see *Schelling–Fichte Briefwechsel*, ed. Hartmut Traub (Neuried: ars una, 2001) pp. 243–68.

14. The journal was to be issued by the publisher Johann Friedrich Gottlieb Unger (1753–1804).

15. M. G. Hermann (born 1754), was editor of the "Neue allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek" from 1794 to 1799.

16. Fichte's letter of August 2, 1800 (Letter 3).

17. Letter of July 30, 1800. Concerning Schelling's reception of Fichte's invitation, see A. W. Schlegel's words to Schleiermacher on August 20, 1800: "Schelling received a few days ago, and I myself yesterday, an invitation from Fichte accompanied by the printed announcement of a *Jahrbücher der Kunst und der Wissenschaft* to be published by Unger. He immediately agreed that our current plans with Cotta as the publisher were right for him. Partly by all manner of contingencies, he has managed to delay his

answer, which is extremely good.” Quoted in: *Aus Schleiermachers Leben. In Briefen*, ed. Wilhelm Dilthey, vol. 3 (Berlin: Reimer, 1861), p. 218.

18. “Review of the Latest Developments in Philosophy and those Sciences dependent on it.”

19. Schelling was asked by A. W. Schlegel in July to participate in his planned journal *Kritischen Jahrbüchern der deutschen Literatur* (Critical Yearbooks of German Literature), also called: *Jahrbüchern der Wissenschaft und Kunst* (Yearbooks of Science and Art). (See GA III/4: 409–14; also reprinted in: *Schelling–Fichte Briefwechsel*, ed. Hartmut Traub, pp. 259–65).

20. “Overview of the Entire Present State of Philosophy.”

21. Reinhold’s review of Schelling’s *System of Transcendental Idealism* appeared in numbers 231 and 232 of the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* on August 13, 1800.

22. Schelling’s letter of August 18, 1800 (Letter 4).

23. The plan cited in note 19 above.

24. Fichte’s letter of August 2, 1800 (Letter 3).

25. The so-called “Entwurf zu einem Plane über ein zu errichtendes kritisches Institut” (Outline of a Plan concerning the Establishment of a Critical Institute) that accompanied Fichte’s letter of December 23, 1799 to August Wilhelm Schlegel and Friedrich Schlegel (in: GA III/4: 168–74).

26. Schelling himself published a number of these separate notices in his journal *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*.

27. Concerning the Woltmann plan, see note 13 above.

28. Fichte wrote to A. W. Schlegel on September 6, 1800 (cf. GA III/4: 301–303). See note 17 above concerning A. W. Schlegel’s “similar” plan.

29. F. G. Klopstock (1724–1803), German playwright. The quote is from his “Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik” (Hamburg, 1774).

30. Fichte, *System der Sittenlehre* (1798); see English translation: *System of Ethics*, eds. D. Breazeale and G. Zöller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

31. Reviewed by K. L. Reinhold in the August 1800 issue of the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*.

32. Schelling’s letter is actually dated September, 5 1800 (see Letter 5).

33. The letter of September 6–12, 1800 (Letter 6).

34. Letter to A.W. Schlegel dated September 6, 1800 (see GA III/4: 301–03).

35. Fichte is referring to a conversation from August 27, 1800 (cf. note in GA III/4: 287–89).

36. See Schelling’s letter dated August 18, 1800 (Letter 4).

37. See note 17 above.

38. The Brothers Veit were Berlin bankers.

39. See A. W. Schlegel’s letter of June 9, 1800 to Schleiermacher: “I therefore think: *Kritische Jahrbücher der deutschen Literatur* (Critical Yearbooks of German Literature). . . . Fichte will have to be informed about the real state of affairs, but I think this should only be done after we have secured a publisher. . . . Fichte can still carry out his plan, but we have made it clear enough to him that he will have to find other collaborators and not us.” In: *Aus Schleiermacher’s Leben*, ed. W. Dilthey, vol. 3, pp. 183f (cf. GA III/4: 308).

40. Cf. Fichte's letter of August 2, 1800 to Schelling (Letter 3) where Fichte mentions his plan, as well as the letter of September 6, 1800 to H. E. G. Paulus (GA III/4: 303–04), and the letter of September 6, 1800 (sent September 12) to A. W. Schlegel: "I find your plan that Schleiermacher passed on to me to be far similar to the one that I drew up in Jena than you are willing to admit, my dear friend, and a great deal more similar to my *new* plan" (GA III/4: 301).

41. I.e., Schelling's plan with the publisher Cotta for a: "Review of the Latest Developments in Philosophy and those Sciences dependent on it."

42. Dated August 18, 1800 (Letter 4).

43. A. W. Schlegel to J. G. Fichte, August 18–20, 1800 (cf. GA III/4: 287–88). Schlegel's "Entwurf zu einem kritischen Institute" (Outline for a Critical Institute) and journal proposal are reproduced in GA III/4: 409–14.

44. Schelling's letter of September 5, 1800 (Letter 5).

45. Schelling's letter is not extant. Nevertheless, Fichte's next letter dated October 3, 1800, refers to a series of questions that appear to have been posed by Schelling in this missing letter from the end of September 1800.

46. The sheet of paper is no longer extant.

47. Fichte is referring to a question in Schelling's previous (missing) letter. See endnote 45 above.

48. In the draft of this letter from October 2, Fichte's formulation is more direct: "I recall often speaking with Fr. Sch. about the synthetic course of my *Wissenschaftslehre*; and he remarked that none of the other exponents of tr.[anscendental] id.[ealism] possess this method. It is possible that in this context I said the same thing about you, because this is what I think: but I see in this no offense to you." (GA III/4: 317–18).

49. Cf. Fichte's draft of this letter from October 2: "Whatever I said, I could have only said it out of respect and friendship for you, because I have never ceased to feel this: it can only occur in a context that evokes these [feelings]; it [can only] be initiated—I do not mean to say that Fr. Sch. tried to catch me out—since I am not used to speaking about people without it being initiated—I am not going to ask you what you think of me)." (GA III/4: 318).

50. An allusion to Schelling's presence at the home of Caroline Schlegel.

51. Schelling spent six weeks in Dresden (from August 18 to October 1, 1798) before going to Jena in October 1798.

52. See the draft of October 2: "Can I ever have said to you about W. Sch., about whom we have always thought the same, anything as harsh as what you said in your last letter about the two Schlegels? "It is quite possible that I could have said to you what I really thought (I now have a more favorable opinion of him after a couple of his more recent articles in the *Athenaeum* and a few of his poems)." "How would I have appeared *if you had repeated (?) this to W. Sch.*"? As though he would have judged it as anything less than *false* or *two-faced*; because neither he himself, nor you, nor anyone else, may recall that I have ever said *the contrary* of this possible opinion. But you accuse me of blatant *falseness*" (GA III/4: 319).

53. In his letter of May 14, 1800 (Letter 1) Schelling had asked Fichte to write a review of Bardili. On August 18, 1800 (Letter 4), however, Schelling informed Fichte that he was going to write a review himself.

54. The plan accompanying the letter of August 2, 1800 (Letter 3).
55. See Fichte's letter of September 6–12, 1800 (Letter 6).
56. Fichte is here referring to his own review of Bardili.
57. Fichte is referring to his project for a new journal that he outlined in a letter to Wilhelm August and Friedrich Schlegel on December 23, 1799 (cf. GA III/4: 168–74).
58. See Fichte's letter of August 2, 1800 (Letter 3).
59. Cf. Schelling's letter dated August 18, 1800 (Letter 4).
60. Fichte is alluding to Schiller and Goethe.
61. Schelling's letter to Fichte is no longer extant. This fragment consists of the literal words of Schelling that Fichte quoted in a letter he sent to Ludwig Tieck, circa October 22, 1800 (cf. GA III/4: 344).
62. The corner of the letter with the date is torn. The letter most presumably dates from October 21 or 22, 1800.
63. Both these letters are missing; see the fragmentary remarks from Fichte's letter to Tieck (Letter 10) and its accompanying endnote.
64. In a letter dated September 12, 1799 (cf. GA III/4: 68–76).
65. In December 1799.
66. As mentioned above, this letter is missing.
67. See the sonnet "Schellings Weltseele" [Schelling's *World Soul*] in *Athenaeum*, volume 3, part 2 (1800), p. 235.
68. This is obviously an error for the bridge over the river *Saale* in Jena.
69. That is to say, that Schelling had perhaps not mastered the synthetic method. (See Letter 9, Fichte to Schelling, dated October 3, 1800).
70. Schelling's brother, Karl Eberhard Schelling (1783–1855), had been a medical student in Jena since 1799.
71. Fichte refers to the question mark in the sentence of the letter of October 3, 1800: "How would I have appeared to him if you had repeated (?) this to W[ilhelm] S[chlegel]?"
72. See endnote four of the correspondence above.
73. See the translation of Fichte's *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, in this volume.
74. All of the correspondence between the publisher Cotta and Schelling is no longer extant.
75. Friedrich Schlegel obtained his doctorate from the philosophical faculty of the University of Jena on August 13, 1800. For the winter semester 1800/1801 he had announced lectures on "Transcendental Philosophy" and "On the Vocation of the Scholar." For his part, Schelling too had announced that he would lecture on transcendental philosophy, as well as the philosophy of art and the philosophy of nature.
76. August Wilhelm Schlegel also had announced philosophical lectures on aesthetics.
77. The journal: *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*.
78. In Letter 12 from the end of October/November 1800.
79. See the fragment of approximately October 13, 1800 (Letter 10).
80. With a letter of October 22, 1800. See J. G. Fichte to L. Tieck (GA III/4: 344f.).
81. See Fichte's *Announcement* and *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, both translated in this volume.
82. As Fichte here mentions, he had written an *Announcement* to advertise his forthcoming *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre 1800*. The *Announcement* bears the

date November 4, 1800, but was first published in the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* on January 24, 1801.

83. *Philosophaster*: a pretender to philosophy.

84. See Fichte's letter to Cotta, dated October 18–20, 1800, which contains a brief history of the entire journal affair from Fichte's standpoint (GA III/4: 334–37).

85. A reference to a letter that is no longer extant; both the author of this report and letter have not been ascertained. However, as Fichte's next words indicate, it was perhaps from Tieck. (cf. GA III/4: 351).

86. *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*.

87. See Fichte's short commentary on this work, translated in this volume: *While Reading Schelling's "Transcendental Idealism" (1800)*.

88. Probably a letter from Schiller that is no longer extant (cf. GA III/4: 351).

89. *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (1800) (*The Closed Commercial State*).

90. Letter 13, Fichte to Schelling, November 15, 1800.

91. In the preeminent case.

92. *Potenzierte*.

93. *Potenz*, lit., exponent, potency.

94. Taken in its literal sense as a "Theory of Science" or "Theory of Scientific Knowledge." See too the full title of Fichte's programmatic text when he first arrived in Jena in 1794: *Concerning the Concept of the Wissenschaftslehre or, of So-called Philosophy* (in: Fichte, EPW, pp. 94–135).

95. *einfachen*, lit., simple or basic power.

96. *Wissenschaftslehre*, again, literally, as a theory of knowing.

97. "Allgemeine Deduction des dynamischen Processes" (*General Deduction of the Dynamic Process*), appeared vol. 1, issues 1 and 2 of the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* (1800) (cf. section § 63, SW IV, 75–78).

98. See note 97 above.

99. *Empfindung*, lit., perception, sensation.

100. *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (*The Closed Commercial State*, 1800).

101. Christian Ernst Gabler (1770–1821), publisher of Schelling's journal.

102. Fichte's review appeared in the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* on October 30–31, 1800.

103. Gottlieb Ernst August Mehmel (1761–1840), professor of philosophy in Erlangen.

104. In a letter to Fichte in March 1799 (GA III/3: 224).

105. Schelling is referring to the first volume of Reinhold's six-volume work: *Beyträge zur leichtern Uebersicht des Zustandes der Philosophie bey dem Anfange des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Contributions to an Easier Overview of the State of Philosophy at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century; 1801–1803).

106. This is Fichte's draft for the following Letter 15. Dated October, this draft was more likely written in December 1800.

107. *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (Berlin: Voss'sche Buchhandlung, 1800); the third book is entitled "Glaube" (Faith).

108. Issues 1 and 2 of the first volume of the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* that Schelling had sent with his letter of November 19, 1800 (Letter 14).

109. Marginalia from Schelling: "Yes indeed!"

110. Marginalia from Schelling: “NB.”
111. Marginalia from Schelling: “I said: the ‘I,’ which is different.”
112. Marginalia from Schelling: “This is what I precisely do and my system rests on this.”
113. Marginalia from Schelling: “That will be cleared up shortly!”
114. It is not clear if these words stem from a (no longer extant) letter that Reinhold had sent to Fichte or from a report that Fichte had heard elsewhere.
115. Letter from K. L. Reinhold in Kiel to J. G. Fichte in Berlin, dated November 23, 1800 (GA III/4: 372–93).
116. One of the two was the banker Levy.
117. August Wilhelm Schlegel.
118. “J. G. Fichte’s Antwortsschreiben an Herrn Professor Reinhold” (*J. G. Fichte’s Response to Herr Professor Reinhold*; Tübingen: Cotta, 1801, in: GA I/7: 290–324).
119. J. G. Fichte, “Friedrich Nicolai’s Leben und sonderbare Meinungen” (*Friedrich Nicolai’s Life and Peculiar Opinions*) (GA I/7: 365–463). Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811) attacked Fichte and other post-Kantian figures in: “Leben und Meinungen Sempronius Gundibert’s eines deutschen Philosophen”; Berlin 1798 (*The Life and Ideas of Sempronius Gundibert, a German Philosopher*). Fichte responded with his *Nicolai* text. Nicolai’s heavy-handed parodies also incited the mockery of Goethe and Schiller in *Xenien*, and earned him the role of the Proktophantasmist in the *Walpurgisnacht* scene of *Faust, Part I*.
120. *Sonnenklarer Bericht an das grosse Publikum über das eigentliche Wesen der neuesten Philosophie* (Berlin, 1801); English translation: *A Crystal Clear Report to the General Public Concerning the Actual Essence of the Newest Philosophy*, trans. J. Botterman and W. Rash, in: *Philosophy of German Idealism* (London: Continuum, 1987), pp. 39–115.
121. Horst Fuhrmans argues this letter was composed in May, 1801, not March. A letter from Schelling to A. W. Schlegel on April 20, 1801 mentions that the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* “appears in the new issue of the *Zeitschrift [für spekulative Physik]* at the Easter book fair.” Easter occurred on April 5 that year. See F. W. J. Schelling, *Briefe und Dokumente, Band I, 1775–1809*, ed. H. Fuhrmans (Bonn: Bouvier u. Co., 1962), p. 246, n. 39.
122. Presumably the “Anhang zu dem Aufsatz des Herrn Eschenmayer betreffend den wahren Begriff der Naturphilosophie, und die richtige Art ihre Probleme aufzulösen” (*Appendix to the Article of Herr Eschenmayer on the True Concept of the Philosophy of Nature and the Correct Way to Resolve Its Problems*), and the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, both contained in the second volume of the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*.
123. Schelling is summarizing the main points of Fichte’s letter of December 27, 1800 (Letter 15).
124. See the translation of Fichte’s *Announcement* in this volume.
125. See endnote 120 above.
126. *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie*, in: *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, Vol. II, fascicle 2.
127. *Erkenntniß*.
128. *gleiche*.
129. *Erkennen*.
130. *Philosophirens*.
131. *Geist*.

132. *Erkennen*.

133. *Wissen*.

134. *Darstellung*, lit., presentation.

135. *Gedanken*.

136. Rather: “Der Geist des Zeitalters als Geist der Philosophie” (The Spirit of the Age as the Spirit of Philosophy), in: *Neuer Teutscher Merkur*, issue 3, March 1801, pp. 167–93.

137. The editors of the Fichte *Gesamtausgabe* consider this a reference to Fichte’s “Vergleichung des vom Herrn Prof. Schmid aufgestellten Systems mit der Wissenschaftslehre” (GA I/3: 235–66). [Excerpt in English: “A Comparison between Prof. Schmid’s System and the *Wissenschaftslehre*,” tr. D. Breazeale, in: J. G. Fichte, *Early Philosophical Writings* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 316–36]. Hartmut Traub argues that it might equally well refer to Fichte’s review of Bardili’s *Grundriss der ersten Logik* or Fichte’s *Friedrich Nicolai’s Leben und sonderbare Meinungen*. See *Schelling–Fichte Briefwechsel*, ed. Hartmut Traub, p. 198 n. 2.

138. Gottfried Ploucquet (1716–1790): German philosopher in Tübingen who followed Leibniz’s idea for a logical calculus in his 1761 *Dissertatio historico-cosmologica de lege continuitatis sive gradationis Leibniziana*.

139. *das einzig Existirende*.

140. *alles Existirende*.

141. The distinction Schelling tries to make here is that between (supposed) immanent universality and mere semantic generality. Bardili and Reinhold adopted a Humean epistemology.

142. *Friedrich Nicolai’s Leben und sonderbare Meinungen*.

143. In Schelling’s own hand the year “1801” has been added, as well as the remark: “First received in August.”

144. Fichte’s is referring to Schelling’s *Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism* which appeared in the *Philosophisches Journal* in 1795: “My reason for asserting that the two thoroughly opposed systems of dogmatism and criticism are both perfectly possible, and that both will coexist alongside the other because all finite beings do not stand at the same level of freedom, is as follows: both systems have the same problem; however, this problem can be only absolutely solved not in a theoretical manner, but only *practically*, i.e., through freedom” (Sixth Letter, p. 187). Without singling out Schelling by name, Fichte rejected this view in his own two Introductions to the *Wissenschaftslehre*, which also appeared in the *Philosophisches Journal*, in 1797 (cf. GA I/4: 210).

145. See Schelling’s letter to Fichte dated November 19, 1800 (Letter 14).

146. For example, see Schelling’s article: *Anhang zu dem Aufsatz des Herrn Eschenmayer betreffend den wahren Begriff der Naturphilosophie, und die richtige Art ihre Probleme aufzulösen* (1801): “There is an idealism of nature and an idealism of the I; the former is original for me, the *latter* is derived” (*Werke*, I/4: 84).

147. Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, translated in this volume. Schelling sent Fichte a copy with his letter of May 15, 1801 (Letter 17).

148. See Schelling’s preface to his *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* translated in this volume: “. . . nor is it my fault that [my] vocal protest against the way idealism is usually exhibited, which has existed since [I started work on] the philosophy of nature, has to date been noticed only by the sharp-sighted Eschenmayer.”

149. Letter of May 15, 1801 (Letter 17).

150. *Seyn*.
151. *Sehen*.
152. The following seven short paragraphs are contained on a separate piece of paper. They are inserted here at this point in the Schelling HkA; in the Fichte GA they appear one paragraph earlier.
153. *realiter*.
154. *idealiter*.
155. *Unbegreiflichen*.
156. Eschenmayer's review of Schelling's two works: *Einleitung zu dem Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* and *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* in the *Erlanger Literatur-Zeitung*, April 7, 1801, also employs geometric examples to illustrate his arguments.
157. *Ibid*.
158. *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (1794); English: J. G. Fichte, *Science of Knowledge*, tr. P. Heath (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970).
159. Fichte in fact forgot to enclose a copy of the *Crystal Clear Report to the Public* (1801). See Schelling's remark in his letter of October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).
160. See Reinhold, "Der Geist des Zeitalters als Geist der Philosophie" in the *Neuer Teutscher Merkur* (1801), pp. 167–93.
161. *ist*, lit., is. Schelling uses "exist" only for finite, conditioned, individual phenomena or modes of being.
162. See I. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
163. *trüben*, lit., becloud, muddy, make turbid.
164. *Wirklichkeit*.
165. in the preeminent case.
166. *Presentation of My System*, §§ 25–30.
167. *Gleichheit*, which can also be rendered as "sameness" or "identity."
168. *Getrenntheit*, lit., separated state.
169. Fichte's previous letter to Schelling, dated May 31 [1801].
170. Cf. *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (GA I/2: 282). This passage is not assertoric; it comments only on the resemblance between the theoretical part of the *Wissenschaftslehre* and Spinoza's dogmatism: It is "Spinozism made systematic, save only that any given self is itself the ultimate substance." J. G. Fichte, *Science of Knowledge*, tr. P. Heath, p. 119.
171. *Sehen*.
172. *Wissen*.
173. *das Ur-Reale*.
174. *Wissenschaft*.
175. *Sache*.
176. dated May 31 [1801] (Letter 19).
177. See Fichte's letter to Schelling of December 27, 1800 (Letter 15).
178. *Ibid*.
179. *bringt es so mit sich*, lit., carries with it.
180. *Modos*, lit., mode.
181. *Organ*.

182. *Verstandesreflexion*.
183. *Vernunft*.
184. *Vernunftewigkeit*.
185. nature.
186. *Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kriticismus*. In the *Philosophisches Journal*, issues 7 and 11, 1795.
187. *Urreale*.
188. *Bogen*, lit., sheets.
189. *Mythologie*.
190. *Götterlehre*.
191. *Naturphilosophie*.
192. Fichte's letter of May 31 [1801] (Letter 19).
193. *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.
194. *völlig gleichgültig*.
195. *Endlichkeiten*.
196. See J. G. Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right*, § 6 Fifth Theorem, Corollaries, tr. Michael Baur (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp. 75–78.
197. Fichte's editor-son refers to: "Ueber das absolute Identitäts-System und sein Verhältniß zu dem neusten (Reinholdischen) Dualismus" (On the System of Absolute Identity and its Relation to the Newest (Reinholdian) Dualism), which appeared in the first issue of Schelling and Hegel's *Kritisches Journal der Philosophie* in 1802, pp. 1–90. Perhaps Schelling is thinking in advance of the dialog *Bruno*, not published until 1802; English: *Bruno, or On the Divine and Natural Principle of Things*, tr. M. Vater (Albany: SUNY, 1984).
198. Eight essays in this series appeared in the April and October 1800 issues of Schelling's *Neue Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* under the title *Fernere Darstellungen aus dem System der Philosophie* (Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy) in: vol. 1, issue 1, pp. 1–77; vol. 1, issue 2, pp. 1–181. Two of these essays are translated in the present volume.
199. In the *Announcement* for his *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre* Fichte had written: "I will not discuss here the extent to which my talented collaborator, Professor Schelling, has been more successful at paving the way for the transcendental standpoint in his natural scientific writings and in his recently published *System of Transcendental Idealism*." Schelling and the Jena romantics perceived the remark as a repudiation of any claim to understand or present transcendental philosophy.
200. *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*.
201. The anonymous reviewer writes in the *Neue Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*: "Mr. Fichte seems to want it made known that Mr. Schelling has not accurately presented the Fichtean *Wissenschaftslehre*" (cited in: GA III/5: 88).
202. G. W. F. Hegel, *Differenz des Fichte'schen und Schelling'schen Systems der Philosophie* (Jena, 1801); English: *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. H.S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany: SUNY Press, 1977).
203. Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742–1799): experimental physicist who explored electricity. He was chiefly known for his posthumous published notebooks or "waste-books," which expounded no systematic philosophy but offered interesting aphorisms on human nature.

204. Although written earlier in October 1801, this letter was only sent to Schelling along with Fichte's letter of January 15, 1802 (Letter 23). Hence, in terms of the chronological reception of the letters, it was only received by Schelling after he had again written to Fichte on January 4, 1802 (Letter 22, no longer extant, see excerpted fragment). For this reason the present letter could also be placed after Schelling's [fragmentary] letter of January 4, 1802.

205. See Schelling's letter to Fichte dated October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).

206. *Proton pseudos*.

207. *diese Form einheimisch sey*.

208. In the *Announcement* in this volume.

209. See Schelling's letter of October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).

210. This letter is lost. The letter was sent via A. W. Schlegel along with a copy of the first issue of the *Kritisches Journal*, authored by Schelling and his new collaborator, G. W. F. Hegel. As far as the personal relations between Fichte and Schelling go, the letter evidently mentioned malicious and spiteful "gossip" that Schelling had publicly broken with Fichte. A letter from Caroline, as well as Fichte's reply, testify that Schelling's tone toward Fichte was warm and cordial in this letter. As concerns the substantive philosophical matters, the letter broached the themes of the relation between philosophical or "scientific" knowing and the absolute, how and to what degree the absolute exists under the form of quantity, and the $\epsilon\nu\text{-}\kappa\alpha\lambda\text{-}\pi\acute{\omega}\nu$ of Spinoza's philosophy. See H. Traub, *op. cit.*, pp. 211–13.

211. Throughout this letter Fichte both explicitly and implicitly refers and returns to events surrounding his departure from Jena in 1799, and certain more recent reports from friends mentioning that Schelling apparently intended to break with him. In Jena in 1799 it appears that both Schelling and Paulus made declarations about Fichte's impending censure, Schelling to a small group of confidants, Paulus to Fichte himself (as the concluding paragraphs show). When news of Schelling's declaration, which supposedly was supportive of Fichte, later reached Fichte in Berlin (perhaps by way of Schad or Hegel), Fichte understood the declaration to be a denunciation (again, perhaps on account of the unnamed friend who presumably had confused the names Schelle and Schelling), and hence a violation of the presumptive pact made in earlier letters not to go public on their disagreements. Fichte elliptically refers to all these events and reports in an apparent effort to finally clear up the continued misunderstandings between himself and Schelling. (For further details, see Schelling, HkA III, 2, 2: 779–83).

212. Johann Georg Muesel (1743–1802), professor in Erlangen, was the editor of a volume listing the most important deceased German writers in the second half of the eighteenth century: *Lexikon der vom Jahr 1750 bis 1800 verstorbenen deutschen Schriftsteller*. *Ausgearbeitet von Johann Georg Meusel* (Leipzig, 1802).

213. *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung*.

214. On page 120 of the first issue of the *Kritisches Journal* there is a criticism of the gossip surrounding Schelling's relationship to Fichte after the announcement of Hegel's *Difference* text and their jointly edited volume.

215. Karl Gottlob Schelle, was a private teacher in Leipzig. On November 11, 1801 he published a declaration in the *A.L.Z.* deploring what he perceived as the bias of the *Erlanger Literatur Zeitung* in favor of the German idealistic philosophers.

216. Fichte is alluding to the report of the new *Kritisches Journal*, edited by Schelling and Hegel.

217. The last section of the letter of October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).

218. As the following paragraph shows, Fichte's own reply and further agreement with Schelling's earlier voiced proposal that they do not attack each other in public was communicated in his letter written and dated October 8, 1801 (Letter 21). However, as already noted (see endnote 204 above), this letter of Fichte was only sent to Schelling in January 1802 (enclosed in Letter 23).

219. A reference to Fichte's letter of October 8, 1801 (Letter 21), which was sent to Schelling together with this letter dated January 15, 1802.

220. Schelling's no longer extant letter of January 4, 1802 (see endnote 210 above).

221. Presumably, another reference to Fichte's and Schelling's mutual agreement not advertise their respective differences (cf. Fichte's letter to Schelling of May 31/August 7, 1801 and Schelling's reply of October 9, 1801), and subsequent letters.

222. *Klatscherei*.

223. *ReflektirPunkt*.

224. See the correspondence of September to October 1800 where Schelling had accused Fichte of 'falseness' (Letters. 8–11).

225. Fichte is referring to Schelling's letter of October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).

226. As the following paragraphs show, Fichte is now explicitly referring to information and events surrounding his censure and departure from the University of Jena in 1799.

227. H. E. G. Paulus (1761–1851), a professor of theology at the University of Jena from 1789 to 1803. Fichte is now providing Schelling with some of the further details concerning his dismissal from the University of Jena in March 1799, in which Paulus had earlier said to Fichte that he would also leave the university if the latter were to be dismissed. For more details of this affair, see D. Breazeale's Introduction: "Fichte in Jena" in: J.G. Fichte, *Early Philosophical Writings*, pp. 1–45, especially pp. 41–44.

228. This walk, in which Paulus met Fichte's wife, was most likely on March 20, 1799. Johanne Marie Fichte (née Rahn) (1755–1819), was originally a native of Zurich in Switzerland.

229. The first letter that Fichte wrote to Privy Councilor C.G. Voigt, March 22, 1799, stating that he would resign from his position at the university if he were to be officially reprimanded for his philosophical activities (cf. GA III/3: 283–86).

230. The rescript or rescind of March 29, 1799 issued by Duke Karl August, reprimanding Fichte and Niethammer, the editors of the *Philosophisches Journal*, with its postscript accepting Fichte's resignation (cf. GA III/371–73).

231. Letter of April 3, 1801 (cf. GA III/3: 291–93).

232. A reference to Reinhold, whom Schelling had called "Zettel" and ascribed to him an imaginary letter in the first issue of the *Kritisches Journal*. See: "Ein Brief von Zettel an Squenz," vol. 1 (1802), pp. 122–30.

233. Wilhelm Traugott Krug (1770–1842), a professor of philosophy in Frankfurt an der Oder. See Hegel's article: "Wie der gemeine Menschenverstand die Philosophie nehme, dargestellt an den Werken des Herrn Krug's" in the *Kritisches Journal*. English translation: "How the Ordinary Human Understanding Takes Philosophy (as Displayed

in the Works of Mr. Krug)” in: *Between Kant and Hegel*, eds. and trans. G. di Giovanni and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 2000), pp. 295–310.

234. Reviews of Krug’s works appeared in the *Neue Deutsche Bibliothek* in vol. 56, pp. 134–41; vol. 69, pp. 168f.

235. See the sentences in italics in the beginning paragraphs of Fichte’s letter of October 8, 1801 (Letter 21).

236. Fichte is above all referring to Schelling’s article: “Ueber das absolute Identitäts-System und sein Verhältniß zu dem neuesten (Reinholdischen) Dualismus” in the *Kritisches Journal*, vol. 1, pp. 1–90.

237. See section § 2 of Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.

238. *Seyn*.

239. *GrundReflexe*.

240. *ReflexionsPunkte*.

241. *Nebenglied*.

242. Letter of May 31, 1801 (Letter 19).

243. *Ein Sehen*.

244. Cf. Spinoza, *Ethica*, I, “De Deo.”

245. See sections § 21 and § 22 of Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.

246. *Aeusserung*.

247. *und jedes zweite Wort ist vom Uebel*, lit., any second word is detrimental, or wrong.

248. of October 3, 1801 (Letter 20).

249. *Einlenken*, lit., coming around, or be accomodating (the expression with which Fichte concludes his letter of January 15, 1802: Letter 23).

250. Fichte wrote to a former student in Jena, Jean Baptiste Schad (1758–1834), on December 29, 1801 that Schelling had never understood him. This letter is no longer extant, but there does exist in Schelling’s own handwriting a partial but apparently literal excerpt of the passages in question: “. . . As for Professor Schelling, what you kindly inform me about him is not unknown to me. I hope that my new presentation [of the *Wissenschaftslehre*], which is to appear at Easter, will show up his pretension of *further extending* my system— which he has *never understood*—in all its weakness. . . . He now clearly admits that he thought the *Wissenschaftslehre* derives the *thing* from the *knowledge of the thing* (leite das Ding von dem Wissen vom Dinge ab), and that earlier with his own idealism he had therefore actually meant this; hence, that he has understood the *Wissenschaftslehre*, as Fr.[iedrich] Nicolai has understood it” (quoted in: Fichte, GA III/5: 100). A letter from Caroline to A. W. Schlegel reports that Schad showed this letter to Schelling in mid-January of the following year, claiming to be equally sympathetic to both philosophers. Cf. *J.G. Fichte/F.W.J. Schelling: Correspondance (1794–1802)*, ed. and trans. M. Bienenstock (Paris: P.U.F., 1991), p. 40, n. 126.

251. *glücklich*, lit., happily, but also “by chance” or haphazardly.

252. *ziemlich*, lit., tolerably.

253. This is the final letter in the exchange between Fichte and Schelling. The latter did indeed go to Berlin for two weeks in May 1802, but it appears that no personal meeting took place between the two philosophers at this time, or in the future, nor was their correspondence ever continued.

Notes to Fichte Texts

1. (GA I/7: 153–64). First published in Beilage no. 1, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 24, 1801, pp. 1–4. It was not reprinted in SW, the 1834–1846 edition of Fichte’s works edited by his son I. H. Fichte, or in Fritz Medicus’s edition of 1908–1912.

2. Caroline Schlegel wrote to Schelling, March 1, 1801 about these words: “I have just read Fichte’s ‘Announcement.’ I must admit that the passage is of the finest ambiguity. I have turned the phrase inside out but can’t make it out. Didn’t Goethe pick up on it when you recently spoke with him about this matter?” (*Fichte im Gespräch*, vol. 3, p. 14) Goethe’s judgment of Fichte’s essay had in fact been rather positive: “Even I was occupied and entertained by the Fichtean ‘Announcement’ in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*” (Letter to Schelling, February 1, 1801, quoted in: *Fichte im Gespräch*, vol. 3, p. 9).

3. See Schelling’s letter to Fichte dated May 15, 1801 (Letter 17).

4. Cf. Fichte’s letters to Schelling of October 8, 1801 and January 15, 1802 (Letters 21 and 23).

5. “. . . I hereby declare Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre* to be a totally indefensible system. For the pure *Wissenschaftslehre* is nothing but mere logic, and the principles of logic cannot lead to any *material* knowledge.” Kant, *Erklärung in Beziehung auf Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre* (AA XII: 370f). See, too, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi’s “Open Letter” to Fichte, March 3–21, 1799 (in: GA III/3: 224–81), where he had put forward the same charge.

6. See, for example, Fichte’s draft for a “preface” in Chapter One of the *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, translated in this volume, where Fichte insists that the *Wissenschaftslehre* is simply the systematic elaboration of a philosophical conception first discovered by Kant.

7. Cf. I. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 837/B 865 (AA III: 541).

8. Jacobi, Open Letter to Fichte, March 3–21, 1799 (GA III/3: 227).

9. Fichte, GA II/5: 331–401.

10. “Spinoza’s system is, by the way, a highly spiritual and profound system. . . . If he had only thought further . . . he would have discovered the critical philosophy, and would have accomplished it very well with his towering spirit. There is also such a system as the Spinozistic one in the critical philosophy.” *Vorlesungen über Logik und Metaphysik 1797* (GA IV/1: 370). See, too, Fichte, *Platner Vorlesungen*: “Pl[atner’s] presentation [of Spinoza] is wholly incomprehensible. I will provide my own presentation of his system according to its spirit: for the letter especially kills here.” (GA II/ 4S: 199f.).

11. See Fichte’s letters to Schelling, October 8, 1801, and especially of January 15, 1802. See too Fichte’s twenty-page analysis translated in this volume: “On the Presentation of Schelling’s System of Identity,” where he also touches on Spinoza.

12. (GA III/3: 227). (Letter reproduced in entirety in Fichte GA III/3: 224–81). See, too, Fichte’s reference to Jacobi at the end of the *Announcement*.

13. This holds for theorems 1 to 7, but with theorem 8, Fichte again employs “postulate” (Cf. GA II/5: 391).

14. The *Ankündigung*, first published January 24, 1801 in Beilage no. 1 of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, pp. 1–4. The text is also known under another title based its opening words: “Seit sechs Jahren” (For Six Years); cf. GA I/7: 153–64.

15. The *Announcement* bears the date of November 4, 1800, whereas the first systematic presentation of Fichte's system, the *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, was available to his students in Jena in September 1794.

16. A reference to the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo*, on which Fichte lectured in Jena from late 1795 until early 1799. The lecture manuscript from 1795 is no longer extant. See the translation of the later manuscripts by Daniel Breazeale: J. G. Fichte, *Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy (Wissenschaftslehre) nova methodo* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

17. Cf. The *New Version of the Wissenschaftslehre*, translated in this volume.

18. The *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (1794–1795) initially was only intended as a handout for Fichte's students. English translation under the title: J. G. Fichte: *The Science of Knowledge* (1794), ed. and trans. P. Heath and J. Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

19. *Grundlage des Naturrechts* (1796–1797); English translation: *Foundations of Natural Right*, ed. F. Neuhouser, trans. M. Baur (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

20. *Das System der Sittenlehre* (1798); English translation: *System of Ethics in accordance with the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre* eds. and trans. Daniel Breazeale and Günter Zöller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

21. See Fichte's *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, first published in the *Philosophisches Journal* in 1797/98; English translation: "Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre" in: *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings (1797–1800)* ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), pp. 2–117.

22. A reference to Schelling's writings on *Naturphilosophie*—the philosophy of nature. See the bibliography for a list of these writings in English.

23. Schelling, *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1800); English translation: *System of Transcendental Idealism*, translated by Peter Heath, with an introduction by Michael Vater (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978, 2nd ed., 1993).

24. Cf. the preface to the "Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre," in: Fichte, IW, p. 4.

25. *Footnote by Fichte*: "I do not consider Prof. Beck, as the author of the *Standpunkt*, to be a member of this school, as Kant himself has noted. Prof. Beck was on the path to the *Wissenschaftslehre*. If he had only made his intentions wholly clear to himself he would have discovered it."

26. Cf. I. Kant, the "Doctrine of Method" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 837/B 865 (AA III: 541). Here Kant argues that the differences between the methods of mathematics and philosophy is that the latter is a form of rational cognition (*Vernunftbegriff*) based on concepts, whereas the former is a form of rational cognition based on the construction of concepts.

27. This reference to a "mathesis of mathesis" is most likely linked to Fichte's reading of the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716); see his concluding remarks at the end of this *Announcement*. "Mathesis" for Leibniz signified a science of philosophical first principles having the same scientific rigor as mathematics. (Cf. too the editor's remarks on Spinoza, Jacobi, and *mathesis* in the introduction to

Fichte's texts). Fichte's remarks also recall his frequent assertions that the *Wissenschaftslehre* is to be a "science of science." See, for example: Fichte, *Concerning the Concept of the Wissenschaftslehre* (1794), in: Fichte, *Early Philosophical Writings*, pp. 94–136.

28. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), German writer, philosopher, and theologian.

29. Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763–1825), German Romantic writer and novelist.

30. *Footnote by Fichte*: "Jean Paul in his *Clavis Fichtiana*. The key won't indeed unlock; for the manufacturer of it has not gained entrance anywhere." See Jean Paul, *Clavis Fichtiana seu Leibgeberiana* (Erfurt, 1800).

31. An allusion to Johann Georg Hamann (1770–1788) and his 1800 article: "Metacritik über den Purismus der Vernunft."

32. *Footnote by Fichte*: "In Kant's *Erklärung* concerning the *Wissenschaftslehre* in the Jena L.Z." See Immanuel Kant's *Erklärung in Beziehung auf Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre* of 1799 (AA XII: 370f); and the letter of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi to Fichte, March 3–21, 1799 (GA III/3: 227).

33. *Footnote by Fichte*: "This is Kant's sense, though he does not use the same words, in his essay against Schlosser: *Über den vornehmen Ton in die Philosophie*." See Kant's essay: *Von einem neuerdings erhobenen vornehmen Ton in der Philosophie* (AA VIII: 387–406).

34. *unmittelbare Evidenz*.

35. *Bestimmtheit*.

36. *alle Vernunft*.

37. *Unwiderlegbarkeit*.

38. *Footnote by Fichte*: "And has not, for all his contemporaries to hear, the founder of an apparently new dogmatic system (the blessed Werner) indicated that: 'The assertion of the infinite divisibility of space is nonsense from geometers—and has brought dishonor on an otherwise *useful* science.'" Georg Friedrich Werner (1754–1798), professor of military science in Gießen. Fichte is referring to his book: *Erster Versuch einer allgemeinen Aetiologie* (Gießen, 1792), p. 85.

39. *Viel-Philosophen gegen die Allein-Philosophen*. A reference to Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi's criticisms in his "Open Letter" to Fichte, March 3–21, 1799 (cf. GA III/3: 224–81).

40. *allgemeine Charakteristik*. Cf. Leibniz, "Preface to a Universal Characteristic" in: Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, eds. R. Ariew and D. Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989), pp. 5–9.

41. Fichte, *Neue Bearbeitung der Wissenschaftslehre* (1800). Fichte wrote his manuscript from October to December 1800; it remained incomplete and Fichte never returned to it. The German text was first published in 1979 in: GA II/5: 331–401. This is a translated extract of approximately half the text, pp. 331–67.

42. *Beschauen*.

43. *Beobachten*.

44. *Bestimmtheit*.

45. *Bestimmbarkeit*.

46. See *ad. 2*.

47. "A = A" refers to the problematic starting point of Fichte's *Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre* from Jena, 1794 (cf. GA I/2: 256).

48. *Nicht Denken*.

49. Although jotted down with this text, these thoughts belong to the “Provisional definition of the title” on the back of the title page of Fichte’s text: *The Closed Commercial State*.

50. See the Introduction to the *Foundations* 1794 and the two introductions from 1798/1799.

51. The *Crystal Clear Report* [*Sonnenklarer Bericht*] was a work published by Fichte at Easter 1801.

52. *Abbildung*.

53. *Postulat*.

54. *Theorem*.

55. *Hinleitungen*.

56. *Lehrsatz* [*sic*].

57. *Hilfslinie*.

58. This latter sentence is found in the margin without any corresponding reference mark.

59. *Vftererkenntnis* [*sic*] *aus Begriffen*. Fichte is here referring to Kant’s presentation in the *Critique of Pure Reason*—See Fichte’s more detailed discussion of this point in the *Announcement*.

60. *Urbild*.

61. *Nachbild*.

62. *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, Jena, 1794.

63. *das ursprüngliche Einkehren in sich selbst*.

64. *Vorstellungen*.

65. See the preface to Schelling’s *System of Transcendental Idealism*.

66. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 132).

67. Cf. Fichte’s *Announcement* for a similar argument.

68. There are two illegible words here in the original manuscript.

69. Cf. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 132).

70. *Gegensetzende*.

71. Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749–1832), German writer, poet, and scientist.

72. Illegible passage in manuscript.

73. Illegible passage in manuscript.

74. See George Berkeley’s (1685–1753): *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*. Part 1, Dublin, 1710.

75. See Fichte, *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, §§ 1–4.

76. Manuscript breaks off.

77. “Bei der Lectüre von Schellings tr. Idealismus”: First published in: Fichte, SW XI: 368–69; reprint: GA II/5: 413–15. Fichte’s text is a brief commentary on F. W. J. Schelling, *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* (System of Transcendental Idealism) published in 1800 by Cotta in Tübingen.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

79. *Erkennen*.

80. *Wissen*.

81. *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (Berlin: Voss’sche Buchhandlung, 1800). English translation: *The Vocation of Man*, trans. Peter Preuss (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987).

82. Schelling, *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1800), p. 28.

83. Friederich Bouterwek (1766–1828), professor of philosophy in Göttingen.

84. Cf. Schelling, *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (First Outline of System of a Philosophy of Nature), Jena, 1799, p. X.

85. “Vorarbeiten gegen Schelling” GA II/5: 483–85. This text is a brief commentary on Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.

86. See Schelling, *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, section § 1.

87. *geschautes*.

88. *Wahrnehmung*.

89. *Vernehmen*.

90. *Vernommen*.

91. Fichte, “Zur Darstellung von Schelling’s Identitätssysteme” (SW XI: 371–89; GA II/5: 487–508).

92. Cf. § 1. of Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* translated in the present volume. Concerning Fichte’s references to the propositions, corollaries, and remarks of Schelling’s *Presentation*, readers are referred to this translation. Any significant departures or paraphrasing of Schelling’s wording will be signaled in the following notes. Fichte’s use of emphasis will be retained (indicated by italics), and occasionally differs from that employed by Schelling in his original text.

93. *Vernunft*.

94. *Nichts*.

95. *Allheit*.

96. *Grund*.

97. *Bestimmtheit*.

98. Fichte’s citation is a slight abbreviation of Schelling’s proposition. See proposition § 4 of Schelling’s *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, translated in this volume.

99. Fichte’s citation is a paraphrased and abbreviated version of Schelling’s § 9 proposition and its corresponding corollary.

100. Fichte’s reference is to the original Latin edition of Spinoza’s work: *Ethica Ordine Geometrico demonstrata* in: *Opera postuma* (1677).

101. *Ibid.*, Book 1, prop. XVI, p. 16.

102. *die ganze Unterscheidung ist nur Produkt des den Begriff des Durchsichselbstseins analysirenden Denkens*.

103. Cf. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Book 1, prop. XXI.

104. Cf. *Ibid.*, prop. XVIII.

105. Cf. Spinoza, *Ethics*, prop. XXV, Corollary.

106. *an sich*.

107. *Nicht an sich*.

108. Cf. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Book 1, prop. XV.

109. *Ibid.*, prop. XXI.

110. *Imago*.

Notes to Schelling Texts

1. *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie*. First published in Schelling’s *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, Band 2, no. 2 (April 1801). (Previously translated in part in *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, tr. M. Vater, in *The Philosophical Forum*,

Vol. XXXII, no. 4 Winter, 2001, pp. 339–71; it appears here with the permission of that journal's publisher.)

2. See the editorial comment on Eschenmayer by Thomas Kisser and associates in Schelling Werke HkA, III, 2, 1, *Briefe 1800–1802*, pp. 72–77.

3. F. W. J. Schelling to C. A. Eschenmayer, February 10, 1800, Werke HkA III, 2, 1, p. 184.

4. *Erste Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie und Einleitung zu dem Entwurf*, Werke HkA III. Translated by Keith R. Peterson in F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

5. Eschenmayer expressed these views in print one year later in a review of *First Sketch of a Philosophy of Nature and Introduction to a Sketch of the Philosophy of Nature* in the *Erlanger Litteratur-Zeitung*, Nr. 67 (April 1801), pp. 529–40.

6. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, Band 2, edited and annotated M. Durner (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2001), p. 239. Hereafter cited as ZsP2.

7. Ibid., pp. 266–67.

8. Schelling to Ch. E. Gabler, 7 September, 1800, HkA II, 2, 1, p. 232.

9. See Letter 13, Fichte in Berlin to Schelling in Jena, 15 November 15, 1800, translated in this volume.

10. See Letter 14, Schelling in Jena to Fichte in Berlin, 19 November 19, 1800, translated in this volume.

11. See ZsP2, pp. 306–310.

12. Ibid., pp. 317–18.

13. See Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781–1801* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2002) pp. 488–90, 558–60.

14. Schelling an J. W. v. Goethe, January, 1801, Werke HkA III, 2, 1, pp. 300–07

15. Schelling an J. W. v. Goethe, February, 1801, Werke HkA III, 2, 1, p. 323. Cf. the editorial note in HkA III, 2, 2, p. 695.

16. By summer 1800, Schelling clearly stated the difference between the way nature acts—as one and all-at-once—and the moments or stages (*Potenzen*) that philosophy of nature must employ to genetically explain the working of nature “to aid in speculative analysis” (*zum Behuf der Spekulation*). “We must not imagine that nature actually goes through these stages in the course of time, rather they are dynamically, or, if you will, metaphysically grounded in it.” *Allgemeine Deduktion des dynamischen Prozesses*, § 30. ZsP2, p. 113

17. See the lengthy editorial comment on Goethe in Werke HkA III, 2, 1, pp. 97–117.

18. The note promises a complete system of identity-theory, nature, and consciousness. The last-named is missing. Disputes with his publisher, Gabler, prevented the appearance of a planned Vol. III of the *Journal for Speculative Physics*, so that the continuation promised in the note to § 159, Corollary 2 did not materialize.

19. See F. W. J. von Schelling, *On the History of Modern Philosophy*, edited and translated by Andrew Bowie (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 114–33.

20. Since he read widely in contemporary English physics and chemistry, Schelling instinctively adopted an Anglophone vocabulary for his metaphysics of identity and

philosophy of nature, viz., *Differenz*, *Indifferenz*, *Identität*, *Potenz*, *-en*, *Potenzierung*, *Prozess*, and so on. His vocabulary becomes more Germanic after 1806 when he absorbs the poetic and theosophical perspectives of Jakob Böhme.

21. These texts are published in SW IV under the title: *Fernere Darstellungen aus dem System der Philosophie*. (Trans. *Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy*, tr. M. Vater, which previously appeared in *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. XXXII, no. 4 [Winter 2001] 373–97; the translations here have been altered, and they appear by permission of that journal's publisher.)

22. Schelling applies this Platonic-sounding name to matter when it is first deduced (§ 54). A careful reading of the *Naturphilosophie*, however, shows that there is no such thing as “other” or “plural” existents. Nature is therefore the *sole existent*, just as Spinoza's *natura naturata* is the sole objective correlate of the one expressive substance, *natura naturans*. Cp. *Ethica* I, P 13, Cor., Schol; P 31; II, P 7, Schol.

23. These passages generally recapitulate the point of view of the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* lectures of 1796–99, and not the more metaphysical ventures into the theory of the intelligible world described in the third section of the *Vocation of Man* and the subject of much discussion in the *Correspondence*.

24. Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1801–1802 contains pointed remarks to this effect. Nature is homogenous and its sort of action under law is perfectly universal, omnipresent in each point. Subjects or real agents, however, are singular-and-plural, and their actions are local and situated. Cp. SW II, pp. 143–44.

25. *Sätze aus der Natur-Metaphysik auf chemische und medicinische Gegenstände angewendet*: 1797. See Editorial Note, HkA III, 2, 1, pp. 75–77

26. Unlike other presentations of the philosophy of nature 1799–1800, the *Presentation of My System of Philosophy* gives a very fluid presentation of the three potencies; the highest phase in each of the three major levels or *Potenzen* seems to be a transition into a more detailed treatment of the same. The term *dynamic processes* is treated in three separate contexts—as universal unification of gravity and light, as a bundle of specific physical features, and as the ground of chemical and biochemical interaction. This version of *Naturphilosophie* also seems to exhibit a twofold tendency to scientific reduction: in the text it is suggested that all natural phenomena involve relative difference in cohesion or specific gravity; later on, it appears that chemical transformation or *metamorphosis* underlies all natural phenomena.

27. *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie* was first published in the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, Bd. 2, no. 2 (1801). [Tr.]

28. Karl Eschenmayer, a follower of Fichte with an interest in philosophy of nature, provided impetus for Schelling's philosophical development at two points: his “Sätze aus der Natur-Metaphysik” (Tübingen, 1797) and “Versuch die Gesetze magnetischer Erscheinungen a priori zu entwickeln” (Tübingen, 1798) suggested that phenomena can be mapped onto a line defined by opposite qualities and then quantified relative to one another, the model for the potency schema developed in § 46 f. In 1803 Eschenmayer suggested, in “Die Philosophie in ihrem Übergange zur Nichtphilosophie,” that Schelling's philosophical direction was theological, and in 1804 Schelling agreed, using the term *God* instead of *the absolute* in his *Philosophy and Religion*. [Tr.]

29. *The System of Transcendental Idealism*, 1800. [Tr.]

30. *Evidenz* [Tr.]

31. See Schelling's letters to Fichte of May 15 and 24, 1801. [Tr.]

32. Karl Leonhard Reinhold, “Beyträge zu leichtern Uebersicht des Zustandes der Philosophie bey dem Anfange des 19. Jahrhunderts,” issue 1 (Hamburg, 1801) pp. III–V. [Tr.]

33. *Erster Entwurf einer Systems der Naturphilosophie*, 1799. [Tr.]

34. See the essays on “intellectual intuition” and “philosophical constructions” from the 1802 “*Fernere Darstellungen aus der System der Philosophie*” that follow in this volume. [Tr.]

35. Schelling was not the only one to speculate about a transcendental interpretation of Spinoza. Late in life, Kant sees Spinoza as doing something similar to transcendental philosophy in that in his “seeing all things in God,” he adumbrates a universal system of all possible objects under one principle [*Kant’s Opus postumum, Erste Hälfte*, ed. Artur Buchenau (Berlin u. Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1936) 12.5–9, 20–23)]. [Tr.]

36. See Michael Vater, “Schelling’s Philosophy of Identity and Spinoza’s *Ethica more geometrica*,” in *Spinoza and German Idealism*, edited by Eckart Forster & Yitzak Melamed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

37. *Magazin zur Vervollkommenung des theoretischen und praktischen Heilkunde*, ed. Andreas Röschlaub, vol. 2, H. 3 (1799), pp. 329–90. [Tr.]

38. *Reflection* is the subject-centered cognition that is the antithesis of the identity-philosopher’s speculative knowing. That cognition is “reflected” suggests it is secondhand, diminished, passive. In the body of *My System* Schelling contrasts reflection to *reason* and associates it with the temporal and dynamic perspective of mechanism. It is synonymous with appearance or with the individual’s self-separation from totality that defines its finitude. In *Further Presentations*, where its use might resonate with Hegel’s *Difference*, it designates cognition tied to a finite existence or associated with sensation; it is also used synonymously with *understanding* to designate the standpoint where being and cognition confront one another as opposites. [Tr.]

39. *Note*: For imagination is related to reason, as phantasy is to understanding. The former is productive, the latter reproductive. [Unless otherwise labeled, all notes that follow are taken from an author’s copy.]

40. *Addition*: isolating, individual.

41. *Note*: The principle $A = A$ needs no demonstration. It is the ground of all demonstration. What is posited by it is only unconditioned being-positing. But where this unconditioned being-positing manifests is completely a matter of indifference for the principle. —This A in the subject position and the other in the predicate position is not what is really posited; what is posited is only the identity between the two.

42. *Note*: What is derived from this same form is therefore equally eternal with absolute identity.

43. *Addition*: or are absolute identity itself.

44. *Addition*: i.e., an attribute of absolute identity itself.

45. *Note*: Only infinite *in its very self*, hence not to be distinguished from being.

46. *Addition*: apart from the one doing the cognizing.

47. *Addition*: of the being of absolute identity.

48. *Addition*: therefore indivisible.

49. *Addition*: in a divisible way.

50. *Note*: Were this form not a cognizing, it would generally not be divisible *qua* form.

51. *Addition*: relative to absolute identity.

52. *Addition*: in general.

53. *Note*: Whether this difference is actual is completely undecided here.

54. *Addition*: of cognizing.

55. *Addition*: of being.

56. *Note*: With quantitative difference, quality too commences.

57. *Addition*: = 1.

58. in act, actualized [Tr.]

59. *Addition*: since only in this way are they discernible.

60. *Addition*: therefore only totality is the *in-itself*.

61. *Note*: I wish to pursue in greater detail the deduction that absolute identity is necessarily totality. It is based on the following propositions:

1. The proposition $A = A$ expresses a being, that of absolute identity; this being, however, is inseparable from its form. So there is here a unity of being and form, and this unity is the supreme existence.

2. The being which immediately follows from the essence of absolute identity can only be under the form $A = A$, or the form of subject-objectivity. This form, however, does not subsist unless subjectivity and objectivity are posited together with [their] quantitative difference. For if both are posited as equally infinite, they are utterly indiscernible, since there is no *qualitative* opposition either; form is destroyed *qua* form; what is both the one *and* the other of the two with equal infinitude coincides with what is neither one nor the other.

3. The same also holds for the higher form of existence that is based on the absolute indifference of cognition and being. Only under this form can the absolute be posited as existing. But if this form is actual indifference, there is no differentiability of the two and this form is not posited as such.

4. Hence the absolute does not exist *actualiter* unless there is also posited a difference with respect to that higher form—the ideal and the real—as the difference between subjectivity and objectivity.

5. Yet this latter difference cannot be posited with respect to the *absolute itself*, since the absolute is inalterably determined as the total indifference of knowing and being, and of subjectivity and objectivity as well. Difference can, therefore, be posited only in respect to what is sundered from the absolute, and only to the degree that it is sundered. This is the individual. But immediately with the individual, the whole is posited as well. Hence the absolute is posited as absolute by being posited with quantitative difference in individuals, but with indifference in the whole. But this situation of difference in the individual and indifference in the whole is precisely totality. Therefore the absolute is only under the form of totality, and this phrase: “quantitative difference in individuals and indifference in the whole” [says] precisely the same thing that “identity of the finite and the infinite”[does].

Definition of quantitative difference. —It is a difference that is not posited with respect to *essence* (we simply do not concede there is such a thing), a difference, therefore, based merely on the diversity of [factors within] *form*, and which for this reason one can also designate a *differentia formalis* [formal difference]. *Example*, the pure idea of a triangle. In it is neither an equiangular shape nor one of unequal angles, neither an equilateral shape nor one of unequal sides. Each of the latter is a quantitative difference of the idea of the triangle. Moreover, the very idea of the triangle can exist only in the

totality of these forms, so that it is indeed always posited in individuals with difference, but with indifference in the whole. –Quantitative difference is in general posited only through the *act of separation* and it holds with respect to [that] separation.

62. *Addition*: of the real and the ideal.

63. in reality [Tr.]

64. *Note*: This opposition appears as an opposition only when I separate myself off.

65. *Addition*: and so too, that of knowing and being.

66. *Note*: The universe does not = the material. –Identity is to all eternity just identity, but a *universe* means a whole of different things.

67. *Addition*: being and cognizing.

68. in potency, or potentially [Tr.]

69. *Addition*: not qualitative.

70. *Note*: Divisibility = quantity: Absolute identity [is] independent of all quantity.

71. *Note*: The primitive basis of the principle of causality.

72. *Addition*: one difference presupposes the other.

73. *Gesetze der Art* [Tr.]

74. *Addition*: and to the extent it is infinite, it is not subject to the law stated in § 36.

75. *Correction*: in its mode of being.

76. *Addition*: e.g., infinite divisibility or, instead, indivisibility.

77. *Note*: The concept of *power* or *potency* can be most accurately understood in the following way. *What is in existence* is always [and] only indifference, and nothing truly exists *outside it*: but it exists in infinite ways too, and it never exists otherwise than under the form $A = A$, i.e., as cognition and being. We can consider it either in the individual or in the whole. It exists in the individual under the same form as in the whole. Within the whole, the opposition under whose form it exists is that of infinite being and infinite cognition, and that which falls in this indifference-point—in the absolute one between these two can for that very reason be neither one nor the other, neither infinite cognizing nor infinite being, and only to the extent that it is *neither* as the one *nor* as the other it is the *in-itself*. Further, being is just as infinite as cognition, and *both*, infinite being and infinite cognizing, are expressed by the proposition $A = A$. Since the proposition expresses both, the infinite thus stands under the form of the proposition $A = A$ with respect to cognition and to being. The indifference of cognition and being is therefore not a *simple* identity of A as subject and A as object (Spinoza), but the indifference of $A = A$ as the expression of being and $A = A$ as the expression of cognition. *Qualitative* indifference would be posited if A as subject and A as object were to be posited over against one another. But this is never the case, except in regard to the finite. In the scope of the infinite, there is not A as subject and A as object, but $A = A$ and $A = A$, i.e., one identity posited over against another. Each is equally infinite, hence indivisible, but precisely because they are equally infinite, they are bound together not through some *synthesis*, i.e., not through something *subordinate* to them, but through what is *superior*, through the absolute *in-itself*. Now since infinite being, like cognizing, [exists] under the form of the proposition $A = A$, that which compared to absolute indifference is a mere *being* is again posited under this form of indifference, i.e., it is *in reference to itself once more the indifference of cognizing and being*. What constitutes a power or potency is just this, that relative to the absolute [something exists] merely

under the attribute of knowing or that of being, that it belongs under $A = A$ either as the expression of being or as that of cognizing.

78. *Note*: All causal derivation is thereby precluded. That of thought from being as well as that of being from thought. The failing of idealism is to make *one potency* the first.

79. See F. W. J. Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, 3: 385, 390. [Tr.]

80. ideally [Tr.]

81. in reality [Tr.]

82. *Richtung*, lit. direction [Tr.]

83. *Note*: Put in other terms, the proposition would read: Neither A as subject nor A as object can be posited *in itself*, but only one and the same $A = A$ with predominant ideality (as the expression of cognition) and reality (as the expression of being) and the quantitative indifference of the two.

84. *Addition*: A as subjectivity or A as objectivity.

85. *Note*: Therefore we never leave the form of subjectivity–objectivity, we never emerge from $A = A$. All differentiation consists just in this: $A = A$ is posited in one direction or tendency as infinite cognition, in the other as infinite being.

86. *Addition*: which is conceived under the concept of quantity.

87. *Addition*: of the construction.

88. *Note*: The same thing for the philosopher that the line is for the geometer.

89. abstractly [Tr.]

90. *Correction*: of existence.

91. *Addition*: as equally real.

92. *Note*: With complete indifference whether identity be conceived under the attribute of one or that of the other.

93. *Addition*: this real-being.

94. *Seyend* [Tr.]

95. *Addition*: as equally real.

96. *Addition*: subjectivity and objectivity. [Some of the Remarks and Explanations that follow were originally set in smaller type when Schelling's *Presentation* appeared in 1801. See "Editorischer Bericht" HkA, I, 10, p. 3. - Tr.]

97. *Addition*: as the indifference of cognition and being.

98. *Addition*: of cognition and being.

99. *Note*: All construction starts from relative identity. Absolute identity is not constructed, but simply *is*.

100. *Addition*: expressed by $A = B$.

101. *Kraft* [Tr.]

102. *Addition*: of the first quantitative difference.

103. *Primum existens*, which is not translated as "first existent" since, properly speaking, there is only one existent, nature itself. [Tr.]

104. *Expansivekraft* [Tr.]

105. *Addition*: of the first quantitative difference.

106. *Note*: Quantitative difference aside, it is not gravity but absolute indifference.

107. *Reellseyns* [Tr.]

108. *seyend* [Tr.]

109. *Addition*: alone.

110. *Seyn* [Tr.]
111. *Addition*: its essence insofar as it give rise to a being, therefore.
112. *Addition*: equal.
113. This remark distinguishing *essence*, *being*, and *nature* is echoed in Schelling's 1809 *Essay on Human Freedom*, SW 7, 358. [Tr.]
114. In the 1809 treatise, Schelling refers back to this whole passage as the origin of his conception of identity as ground-and-existence, or the dynamic evolution of result from causes and conditions, which is vital to his analysis of the ontological difference between nature and the human realm, and between God's primordial ground and God's self-realization in inorganic nature, life, and human historical existence (see SW 7, 357ff). [Tr.]
115. *Addition*: or.
116. *gesetzt*, lit. posited or postulated. Schelling's use of *Setzen* deviates from Fichte's sense of self-positing or self-evident postulation, and so is often translated as "establish" in the theorems on the philosophy of nature. [Tr.]
117. *Addition*: delimited.
118. Empirically, specific gravity is the ratio of the density of one substance to that of another substance, usually water. It is a dimensionless quantity. [Tr.]
119. *Addition*: hence, the unity of light and gravity.
120. *bestehend* [Tr.]
121. *Addition*: while $A = B$ signifies a determinate potency.
122. *Addition*: from which originates process.
123. *Addition*: the first quantitative difference of being.
124. *Addition*: the quantitative position of A and B.
125. *actu* [Tr.]
126. *Gesetztseyn* [Tr.]
127. *Note*: The text expressly says *provisionally*; this is not yet the determinate concept of nature. Within the whole, everything that is merely the *ground* of reality, and not itself reality = nature.
128. *Addition*: to become ideal with the product.
129. *Addition*: the second potency.
130. *Correction*: no actual being pertains to it, but a pure and simply immediate being which follows from its essence.
131. *Note*: An indifferent substrate is presupposed here.
132. Empirically, cohesion is an attractive force that binds the parts of a material substance together. Schelling uses the concept here as the most general property of gravitational force manifested in matter. It later becomes a specific concept of molecular attraction in chemistry. [Tr.]
133. Anton Brugman, *Versuche über die magnetische Materie, und deren Wirkung in Eisen und Magnet*, C. G. Eschenbach (Leipzig, 1784). [Tr.]
134. in actuality [Tr.]
135. potentially [Tr.]
136. *spezifischen Gewichts*, lit. specific gravity or weight. What is under discussion in the following theorem is the density of various substances and how that supports the phenomenon of magnetic attraction or repulsion. [Tr.]

137. Henrik Steffens (1773–1845)—mineralogist, professor of natural science, philosopher of religion. Schelling refers to his *Contributions towards a Natural History of Terrestrial Bodies*, Part 1 (Freiberg, 1801). [Tr.]

138. *spezifisch leichtern* [Tr.]

139. *Addition*: I note this too about the *relation of cohesion to gravity*. Gravity arises from pure, absolute being, since it is the essence of absolute identity itself. For this very reason, it is not, but is the mere *ground of being*, first posited as being through cohesion. But identity is compelled to subsist only under a form (compelled, namely, because what is *pure* being is also infinite *cognition*, and whatever is a modification of the one is also a modification of the other), it is completely necessary that a conflict between gravity and cohesion be posited. This conflict results in what we term *specific gravity*. What is specific therein is the factor determined by cohesion; it is the individual or particular aspect of a thing. Gravity itself is incapable of any quantitative difference. The synthesis of the factor that is in itself untouched by all difference and is absolutely self-identical and of that which is different and incapable of being self-identical constitutes what we call *specific gravity*. –The actualization of cohesion compels the force of gravity to posit indifference within difference, and indeed gravity necessarily strives to maximize the expression of indifference. But the act whereby cohesion (the act of cognition) is posited gives rise to a polarity in general, hence difference or the positing of indifference under the form of A and B. Gravity and cohesion are therefore set in opposition; since cohesion gives rise to difference, while gravity gives rise to indifference within difference, there is an inverse ratio between them up to a certain point; at that point, the former act no longer establishes cohesion, but the complete dissolution of cohesion (which entirely disappears at the poles). So in this contest [between gravity and cohesions] originate all the possible relationships that are discussed in the [above] §.

140. *Correction*: where particularity predominates.

141. *Correction*: which arises in one and the same substance.

142. *Addition*: that the particular.

143. *Addition*: that the universal.

144. *Note*: of the one [universal] indifference.

145. *Note*: For only the one totality subsists, in which each body occupies one determinate point and is for this reason necessary in this totality.

146. This *striving* is the correlate of Spinoza's *conatus* (see *Ethica* III, P7); it is an ontological, not a psychological, category. [Tr.]

147. *Correction*: assert its identity only through cohesion.

148. *Note*: For it advances in cohesion only on account of its endeavor toward totality, hence, only in opposition to another [body], in association with which it constitutes a magnet. But this is impossible without a simultaneous increase and decrease in cohesion (cp. § 83).

149. *Addition*: We do not depart from the schema of the straight line.

150. *Correction*: it posits the relation of cause and effect. – Identity is in no way a determining ground for action; that is established only through *being*. Hence, insofar as bodies are determined as substance and accident through relative identity (magnetism), so they are substantively determined or determined as substance and accident through relative duplicity. The first relation introduces the universal into particularity, the second,

the particular into universality. Just as absolute cohesion or the simple first dimension [arises] through magnetism, through electricity [arises] the second—length and breadth.

151. *Addition*: and why in magnetism manifests nothing more than the pure appearances of attraction and repulsion, in this case contact and separation are inconceivable.

152. *Note*: The basic law of all electrical processes.

153. Schelling uses –E and +E to signify negative and positive electricity. [Tr.]

154. *Note*: because the condition of the former is contact between indifferent bodies, and of the latter, contact between different bodies.

155. *Addition*: +

156. *Addition*: –

157. *Addition*: that is, a process of increasing cohesion.

158. *Addition*: an inverse ratio of generating heat and electricity.

159. *Addition*: i.e., loss of heat stands in a proportional ratio to the electrical process.

160. *Note*: In general, almost all the theorems which follow prove that everything is subject to the schema of reflection or the imaging of identity within difference.

161. *Addition*: mere.

162. *actu* [Tr.]

163. *Addition*: i.e., thereby, in quantitative difference.

164. *Note*: Hence, absolute identity as *ground* of existence = gravity, which again can be established as existing only through being posited under the form of A and B, with quantitative difference. In this way, however, it is posited only *as* gravity. Only when identity establishes A and B as the form of *one being* does identity posit itself in light.

165. Schelling cites this passage in the 1809 *Essay on Human Freedom* as one of the precursors to the distinction he there elaborates between *being* and the *ground of being*. That being or reality results from a ground without being identical to its ground furnishes the logic for distinguishing nature and God, and also nature and humankind; the former are marked by necessity, the latter by freedom or decision. See Schellings Werke 7, 357–58. [Tr.]

166. Cp. Ibid., 358, where this sentence is virtually reproduced. [Tr.]

167. Johann Wolfgang Goethe. [Tr.]

168. *Note*: More precisely: it produces the being wherein the form of its existence can arise.

169. *Note*: More precisely: it is gravity insofar as the universal form of existence has already arisen in it.

170. *Note*: Accordingly, the essence of matter is really = the essence of the infinite and is immediately expressed in nothing concrete.

171. *Principium mere ideale actu existens* [Tr.]

172. Schelling started to use the term *dynamic explanation* in 1800 for the *a priori* or constructive approach to physics he favored over the “atomistic” approach practiced by empirical investigators (See “Allgemeine Deduktion des dynamischen Prozesses” § 63.) This approach harks back to Kant’s construction of matter from attractive and repulsive forces in *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (1786) A 52–94. For a fuller discussion of dynamic process, see below § 108, Remark. When Schelling uses it in a broad sense, the dynamic process includes the first two of the high-level powers or orders

of nature, *gravity* and light; used in a finer sense, the term denotes density (specific gravity), gravity, magnetism, and perhaps electrical phenomena—all mediated by changes in cohesion for two or more bodies in relation. Electrical phenomena are sometimes included in the dynamic process, though in “galvanism” electricity seems to be associated with chemical interactions. Insofar as he works with empirical phenomena, Schelling sometimes seems to favor chemical interaction as the *terminus a quo* of explanatory reduction—and at other times cohesion. When it comes to mapping empirical variations onto the metaphysics of indifference of the *Presentation's* earlier sections, magnetism is the key for exhibiting identity-in-difference, and so provides the moment of *Evidenz* or insight on which the plausibility of the whole construction depends. [Tr.]

173. *actu* [Tr.]

174. *Note*: If the question of the true origin of the material universe is posed, one can neither say that it had a beginning nor that it had none. This is because it is simply or in its very idea eternal, i.e., it has no relation *whatsoever* to time. All time determinations reside only within finite reflective cognition, while in themselves all things are contained in an eternal and non-temporal way in the absolute. But if one asks after the act of sundering whereby the material universe separates itself from the all for reflective cognition and goes over to temporal existence, the magnet ([or] its product, cohesion) is the principle of individuation, [or] actively expressed, self-consciousness.

What separates itself [from the absolute], separates itself only *for itself*, not in the perspective of the absolute. This is certainly [exhibited] most clearly in the highest act of separation, the I. I *am* only in that I know of myself, and apart from this knowing, nothing [subsists] *as* I. The I is its own act, its own deed.

In bodily things, however, there is a passive expression of the act of separation which is living and self-active in the I, a principle of individuation in them that is expressed *in* the absolute itself in order to separate them, not in the perspective of the absolute, but rather in their own perspective. – The individual enters time, yet in the perspective of the absolute, it does not stray from eternity. Everything that pertains to the *form* of the universe is comprehended in the absolute, only not in a temporal way. Since this form is quantitative difference (i.e., finitude in the individual) and indifference (i.e., infinitude in the whole), so finite beings, even the entire series of them, are equally eternal and simply present in the absolute, just not *as* finite. This eternal order of things, within which one posits the other and is itself possible only through the other, is not originated, or if it is originated, it originates anew with every consciousness.

Absolute identity is like the moment of the universal dissolution of all things; nothing in it is differentiated, even if everything is contained in it. Finite cognition, self-consciousness, turns this state of utmost transparency opaque, and, if we may extend our simile, the material world is a sediment or precipitation of absolute identity, while the ideal world is a sublimation of it. These two are not separated in the absolute, but are united; and, in turn, that wherein they are united is the absolute.

175. chemical elements [Tr.]

176. chemical transformation [Tr.]

177. *Note*: Sulfur, phosphorus.

178. *Addition*: first.

179. *Addition*: and form products in the middle.

180. *Correction*: The former pair will increase cohesion, the latter decrease it.
181. *Addition*: and conversely, in the sense in which one can decompose any other matter, it too is water.
182. *Addition*: south, north, east, and west poles.
183. This sketch of the foundations of chemistry relies on the primitive ideas of gravity and cohesion. Steffens reports in 1800 that Schelling then considered oxidization and deoxidization to be fundamental natural processes (*Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, vol. 1, issue 1, p. 143). See section § 112 ff. [Tr.]
184. *Addition*: quality.
185. *Addition*: absolute constancy.
186. *Note*: For just this reason the common notion of *specific gravity* is likewise impossible (as if it rested on a multitude of small particles). Every A = B already [has] specific gravity.
187. *Correction*: [bodies] of the greatest specific gravity.
188. *Correction*: gravity [*Schwere* for *Schwerkraft*] [Tr.]
189. *Correction*: the real unity.
190. *Addition*: indeed of this determinate existence whereby it = light.
191. *Addition*: determinate mode or.
192. *Addition*: of the true indifference-point of the cohesion-series, and so posited where difference is posited and in *the same ratio* as difference.
193. *Von der Weltseele, eine Hypothese der höhern Physik zur Erklärung des allgemeinen Organismus* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1798). [Tr.]
194. *getrübt* [Tr.]
195. *Addition*: the positing of light [happens] under one or the other form [viz., refraction or reflection].
196. *Note*: with quantitative difference according to form, but not according to essence.
197. J. W. Goethe, *Contributions to Optics* (Weimar, 1791). [Tr.]
198. Wilhelm Herschel (1738–1822), a Hanoverian musician, astronomer and scientist, credited with the discovery of Uranus and its two moons, as well as two moons of Saturn. Schelling refers to an experiment he performed in 1800 in which he passed light through a prism and discovered a sharp rise in temperature in a thermometer placed at the red end of the spectrum. Herschel later inferred the existence of a nonvisible infrared light. [Tr.]
199. *Farbengespenst*, lit., color-ghost [Tr.]
200. *Refrangibilitätsordnung* [Tr.]
201. *Reagentien*, lit., reagents [Tr.]
202. *Addition*: without [regard to] any difference of mass.
203. *Correction*: in the dynamic process.
204. *Addition*: since [in them] there is no absolute indifference.
205. *Addition*: mere.
206. *Addition*: as in, e.g., the magnet.
207. *Proceß* [Tr.]
208. *Addition*: a decomposition.
209. *Addition*: relatively.
210. *Sauerstoff*, lit. sour-stuff [Tr.]

211. Ludwig Achim von Arnim (1781–1831) – scientific researcher, musicologist, journalist and Romantic writer. Schelling refers to his “Ideen zu einer Theorie des Magneten,” *Annalen der Physik*, Bd. III, Halle, 1800. [Tr.]

212. Alessandro Volta (1745–1827) developed the first electrical battery in 1800. [Tr.]

213. Bioelectrical phenomenon, discovered by Luigi Galvani (1737–1798); an electrical charge applied to the leg nerves of a dissected frog caused the leg to move. [Tr.]

214. John Ash 1723–1798), British medical and chemical researcher. [Tr.]

215. *Anschauung* [Tr.]

216. *die thierischen Theile* [Tr.]

217. *organische Bedeutung* [Tr.]

218. *potentialiter* [Tr.]

219. *actu* [Tr.]

220. Carl F. Kielmeyer (1765–1844)—botanist, chemist and philosopher of nature at Tübingen. His theory of biological recapitulation anticipated Darwin in some respects. [Tr.]

221. ‘Moment’ in mechanics signifies motion or cause of motion generally. Magnetic moment is the measure of the magnitude and direction of magnetic movement. [Tr.]

222. *Correction*: can be expressed only through the moment of adhesion.

223. *Addition*: absolute.

224. *Auffallendsten*, lit., most shocking [Tr.]

225. *Erfindung*, lit. invention or instrument [Tr.]

226. *Glied in . . . Ketten*, lit., link in . . . chains [Tr.]

227. i.e., incapable of measurement [Tr.]

228. *Correction*: weight. [*Schwerkraft* replaced by *Schwere*. [Tr.]]

229. *Potenzen*. [Tr.]

230. *das Existirende* [Tr.]

231. *Stoffe* [Tr.]

232. *Pol* [Tr.]

233. *potentialiter* [Tr.]

234. *Materien*, lit. matters; what today would be termed chemical *elements*. [Tr.]

235. *Addition*: inside this potency.

236. *das Potenzlose ist*. Schelling is playing with nuances of *Potenz* throughout this passage: *level*, *power*, *potency*, or *exponent* (math.) Differences or properties emerge from the potentiation of indifferent matter, substances can interact with and transform each other by the power or action of those properties, and bodies can be cataloged as pertaining to different levels of natural activity – magnetism, electricity, heat, chemical interaction. All natural properties are phenomenal, however, or (as we might say today) *emergent*. [Tr.]

237. *Potenzlos* [Tr.]

238. *Salzsäure*, lit. salt acid [Tr.]

239. *der chemische Proceß* [Tr.]

240. modes of existence [Tr.]

241. *Verbrennungs-Proceß* [Tr.]

242. *Addition*: where the body that is relatively + is oxidized.

243. lit., transformation; so, by extension, chemical interaction. [Tr.]

244. *das Reelle*. [Tr.]
245. *Addition*: reciprocity.
246. See above, § 72, Remark and § 95, Cor. 1, Remark. [Tr.]
247. *Addition*: of the potency.
248. *An-sich* [Tr.]
249. *Correction*: as a mere attribute (and only in reflection).
250. *Correction*: as mere attribute.
251. *das Substantielle* [Tr.]
252. *Metamorphose* [Tr.]
253. *Richtungen* [Tr.]
254. *ins Unendliche*, lit., indefinitely [Tr.]
255. *Wirksamkeit* [Tr.]
256. “prime existent,” i.e., matter [Tr.]
257. In 1809, Schelling cites this passage too as one of the sources for his distinction between the concepts of *ground* and *existence*. See Schellings Werke 7: 357ff. In the 1801 *Presentation*, *being* or *subsistence* means “phenomenal being” and it is synonymous with *existence*. [Tr.]
258. *Correction*: attributes.
259. *Correction*: the ground of $A = B$ as substance lies outside of it.
260. *Addition*: attribute
261. *Correction*: excitability.
262. “*Prime Existent*” [Tr.]
263. *second existent* [Tr.]
264. Reading this for “ $A^3 = (A^2 - A = B)$.” [Tr.]
265. *An-sich* [Tr.]
266. *Weltkörper* [Tr.]
267. *Addition*: merely.
268. *Note*: The plant [is] the pole of particularity, the animal that of the universal.
269. *das herausgekehrte Innere* [Tr.]
270. *Note*: or it is them already, before it becomes them [. . . *sie ist es schon, ehe sie es wird*. [Tr.]]
271. *Potentially* [Tr.]
272. *Correction*: by a glimmer.
273. *Entwicklung*. Schelling uses “*Metamorphosis*” (transformation) to signify organic development or articulation in subsequent theorem and corollaries. Previously, *Metamorphosis* signified chemical interactions, the highest level or organization achieved in inorganic nature. The organic is in one sense a continuation of inorganic nature, and in another, a new beginning, or a new organization within nature. The organic and the inorganic are not different in nature, but indifferent. [Tr.]
274. *Umkehrung* [Tr.]
275. *Geschäft* [Tr.]
276. *das pflanzenhafte Geschlecht* [Tr.]
277. Botanical term formerly used for propagation without flowers or seeds, as in spore-produced ferns, mosses, fungi, and algae. [Tr.]
278. *Geschlecht*, lit. sex or species [Tr.]
279. *Note*: The quantitative ratio.

280. *Erregung*. [Tr.]

281. In fact, a subsequent issue of the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik* never appeared. In the *Neue Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, vol. 1, issues 1 & 2 (1802), Schelling published eight topical essays related to the 1801 *Presentation* under the particular title *Fernere Darstellungen aus der System der Philosophie*. The essays consider: § I., the merit of mathematical versus philosophical cognition, § II., intellectual intuition, § III., the idea of the absolute, § IV., philosophical construction, § V., the real and ideal series in the three potencies of philosophy, § VI., the construction of matter, § VII., the speculative meaning of Kepler's laws of planetary motion, and § VIII., the formation of the solar system and the relations of its planets. All of the essays were penned in 1801 and they more or less cover the concerns expressed in the above note. The second and fourth essays follow in this volume. [Tr.]

282. *Geschick* [Tr.]

283. *Daseyn* [Tr.]

284. *Evidenz*, an objectively founded state of certainty [Tr.]

285. *Evidenz* [Tr.]

286. We do not differ from dogmatism in that we assert an identity of thought and being in the absolute, but that we assert an absolute unity of thought and of being in *knowing*, and thereby, that we assert the being of the absolute inside knowing and of knowing inside the absolute. *Author's note*.

287. Reading *unmittelbar* for *mittelbar*. [Tr.]

288. *Seyn* [Tr.].

289. Most people understand by "intellectual intuition" something incomprehensible, mysterious, but with no more reason than one would have in thinking the intuition of pure space something mysterious, disregarding the fact that all outer intuition is possible only *in* and through this intuition. —Both space and time are the unity of being and thought, fallen into different forms only in the sensible world. The reflected world is precisely this one, where the infinite and the finite appear separated. Consequently, to the extent that it falls within the sensible world itself, the unity of the two can only be reflected *either* in the infinite or in *the finite*. These two reflections are what we call time and space (the relation of the two = subjective : objective). The unity of the two—not, once more, what it may be in the infinite or in the finite, but—intuited *in itself*, is just the principle of absolute science; it is the object of *pure* intellectual intuition and also intellectual intuition itself, since here intuition and object are identical. Now that in which the infinite and the finite are one is the eternal. Absolute science is consequently a science of *the eternal, in its very self*. Absolute science has to display its constructions within the eternal, just as geometry has to display its constructions within the universal image of the eternal, space. Since space itself falls within the sensible world, and, accordingly, the intuition of space is in one respect still a sensible intuition, so geometry exhibits, e.g., its archetypes in what is in one respect still a sensible *intuition*—or it presents them in *reflected* intellectual intuition. The eternal *as such* lies entirely outside the world of sense. *Author's note*.

290. *Evidenz* [Tr.]

291. preeminently [Tr.]

292. *or*: therefore it is one with the absolutely ideal, with archetypal knowledge, and coincides with it in cognition. *Author's note*.

293. In this very feature, that it proceeds from absolute cognition, philosophy also pursues its self-demonstration (it can prove itself only because it is absolute science). It leads us to the point where this absolute knowledge, which = the absolute itself, is *informed in us* as the idea and the essence of our soul. *Author's note.*

294. This continuation appeared in *Neue Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, vol. 1, 2. Stück, 1802 under the specific title “Der fernere Darstellungen aus dem System der Philosophie anderer Theil.”

295. *Recapitulation.* —Our previous discussion has furnished us with the following items of cognition as material for the whole of the subsequent construction; their development and proof was the goal of all our previous inquiry. 1. Absolute knowing is also the absolute itself. Proof. Absolute knowing = unity of thought and being, hence this necessary form or mode of being [holds] with respect to the absolute, and this form or mode of being and the absolute itself are again one by virtue of the idea itself. Therefore, the form or mode of being the absolute subsists along with absolute knowing, and so too the absolute itself. 2. Of the absolute [itself] there is no thought and no being, hence also no subject and no object, but the absolute is exactly and only what is absolute, without any further determination. But this very absolute, by virtue of the necessary form of its essence, which is absolute ideality, posits itself *objectively*, i.e., it posits its own proper substance which in contrast to the object now takes on the character of the subject, of *the infinite*; it posits its own substance as infinite within the finite, but, conversely, for this very reason, it posits the finite within itself as infinite—and both in *one act*. This is the way the infinite and the finite originate *from* the absolute, namely through its own subject-objectification (not an origination in time, however, but an eternal one). In this respect, the absolute is determined as that which is intrinsically neither thought nor being, but which, for that very reason, is absolute. Since reason is challenged to conceive the absolute neither as thought nor as being but still to think it, a contradiction arises for reflection, since for it *everything* is *either* a case of thinking or one of being. But intellectual intuition enters into even this contradiction and produces the absolute. In this breakthrough lies the luminous point where the absolute is positively intuited. (Intellectual intuition is therefore merely negative within reflection) Through this positive intuition, philosophical construction as such is first made possible, or exhibition in the absolute, which is the same thing; this is the topic of § IV. *Author's note.*

296. *Vorstellung* [Tr.]

297. The recurring antithesis of the universal and particular thus is resolved itself in that each of them is established, the universal and the particular, and with the first identity is posited the second. Every particular within the absolute is itself this (the absolute), i.e., the unity of the infinite and the finite, only intuited in a particular form. The particular forms are = possibilities within the universal identity of the finite and the infinite. These possibilities are to be explained in their infinite ramifications. *Author's note.*

298. *Gleichheit* [Tr.]

299. *Ineinsbildung*; the term also resonates with *Einbildungskraft* (imagination). [Tr.]

300. *In eins gebildet* [Tr.]

301. *Wesenheit* [Tr.]

302. *der Art nach* [Tr.]

303. *Seyn* [Tr.]

304. *In-eins-Bildung* [Tr.]

305. *wirklichen* [Tr.]

306. an echo of Romans 8: 20, which Schelling again paraphrases in *Bruno*, SW IV, 223.

307. which has priority only in a certain context, e.g., I-hood as relative unity. *Author's note.*

308. *Entzweiung* [Tr.]

309. *Verstand* [Tr.]

310. The views discussed in this and the subsequent three paragraphs are substantially repeated in *Bruno*, SW IV 307–310; see *Bruno, or On the Natural and Divine Principle of Things*, tr. Michael Vater (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984) pp. 203–205.

311. *Erkenntnisse*. Cognates of *Erkennen* (lit. cognize) have been rendered as ‘know’ or ‘knowledge’ in this paragraph. [Tr.]

312. *zur Form gebildet haben* [Tr.]

313. A reference to Fichte’s newly published dialogue, *Sonnenklarer Bericht an das größere Publikum über das eigentliche Wesen der neuern Philosophie* (1801). English translation: *A Crystal Clear Report to the General Public Concerning the Actual Essence of the Newest Philosophy: An Attempt to Force the Reader to Understand*, trans. John Botterman and William Rash, in: ed. Ernst Behler, *Philosophy of German Idealism* (New York: Continuum, 1987), pp. 39–115.

314. *Speculation*, as Schelling uses the term in this period, is the philosophical counterpart of *reflection*, hence a partial philosophical position that fails to achieve systematic foundation or comprehensiveness. See Klaus Düsing, “Spekulation und Reflexion: Zur Zusammenarbeit Schellings und Hegels in Jena,” in *Hegel-Studien* 5 (1969): 95–128.

315. *Begrifflichkeit* [Tr.]

316. *Popularität* [Tr.]

317. *zum Ende* [Tr.]

318. Or the insight that absolute knowledge is also a knowledge of the absolute. *Author's note.*

319. One should recall that Schelling was trained in Christian theology. That there is the absolute and its form, which latter is shared with Philosophy and is operative in it as intellectual intuition is a secularized version of the doctrine of the Trinity. Though there are superficial resemblances between Schelling’s talk here of the “night absolute” and its revelation in the “daylight” of the form-*Logos* and Jakob Böhme’s cosmological theology, and though Böhme may have been discussed among the Jena romantics as early as 1799, there is no undisputed evidence that Schelling had studied his writings as early as 1801 when these passages were penned. See Paolo Mayer, *Jena Romanticism and its Appropriation of Jakob Böhme* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999) pp. 181 ff. Hegel pursues a similar line of thought at roughly the same time in his *Difference-essay*: “The Absolute is the night and the light is younger than it. . . . But the task of philosophy consists in uniting these presuppositions, to posit being in non-being, to posit dichotomy in the Absolute, as its appearance, to posit the finite in the infinite as life” [*The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*, tr. H. S. Harris & Walter Cerf (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1977), pp. 93–94]. [Tr.]

320. Its universal factor is the absolute, but so is its particular, since it receives the entire absolute into itself and even in uttermost particularity it becomes entirely absolute again. —One might object that the idea is finite, since it necessarily refers to

a particular object. But the objection considers a concept that is opposed to the object, which is not the case in the idea. Every particular object is in its absolute status idea, and accordingly the idea is also the absolute object itself, just as the absolutely ideal is the absolutely real. *Author's note.*

321. *Demonstration*, a term, like many of Schelling's technical vocabulary, borrowed from English. [Tr.]

322. See *Presentation of My System*, § 1–17, but especially § 17, Corollary 2. [Tr.]

323. *Erwiesen* [Tr.]

324. It is not yet idealism to say that the world of sense is nothing. *Author's note.*

325. *wirkliche*. Actuality is the second of Kant's three modal categories, all of which are predicated of appearances, so it does not connote ontological status. [Tr.]

326. For the actual originates precisely through this separation of form from essence, from the in-itself, from the universe. *Author's note.*

327. On this matter compare the comment [Schelling made] later in *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie*, [F. W. J. Schelling, *Werke*, Vol. XI,] p. 370, n. 1. Ed.

328. *Wesenheit* [Tr.]

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